

*Through the Bible
Day by Day*

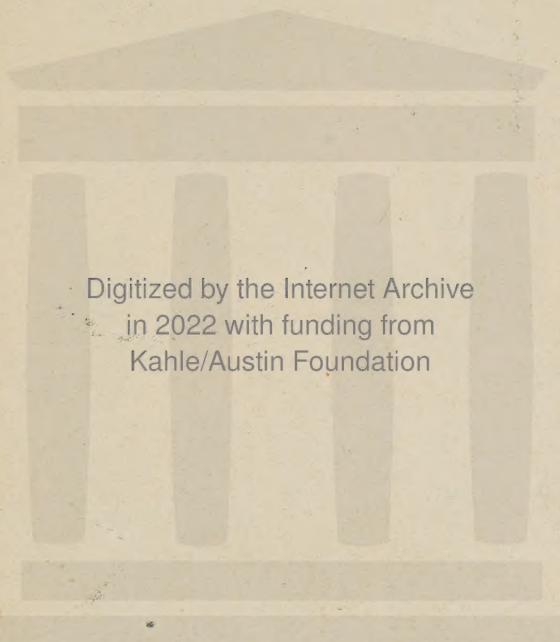
A DEVOTIONAL COMMENTARY

F.B. Meyer

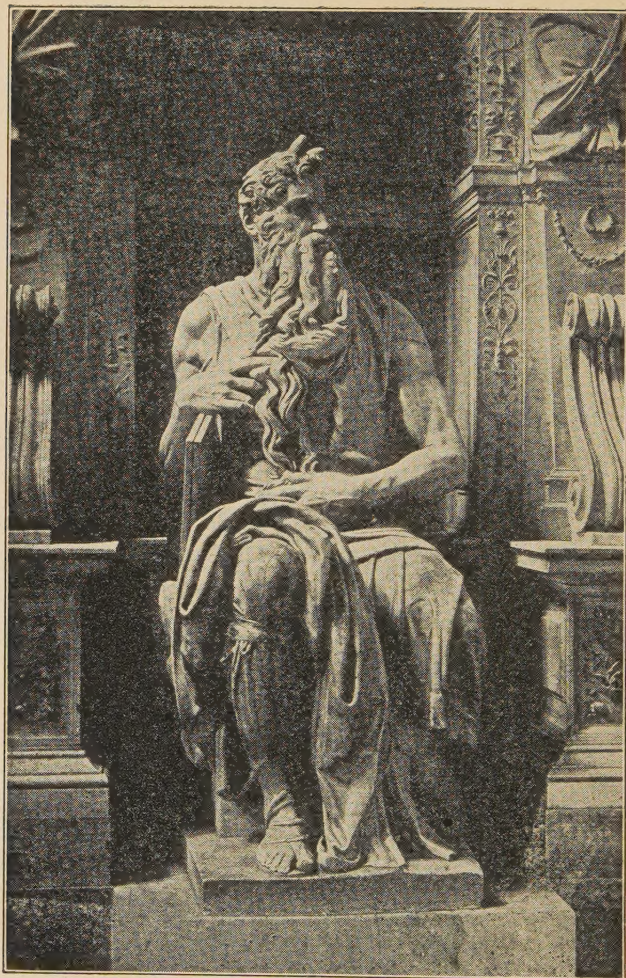
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Through the Bible Day by Day

A Devotional Commentary

BY

REV. F. B. MEYER

Arranged for Daily Reading, with Book Introductions,
Outlines and Review Questions

Illustrated from Paintings by Modern Artists

VOLUME I

GENESIS TO JOSHUA

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INTRODUCTION

THERE is need everywhere for the cultivation of the habit of reading some portion of God's Word *each day*. Such reading should be *consecutive*, for only thus can continuous interest be maintained. It may also be greatly helped by an *interpreter*, who will explain what is obscure as well as suggest applications of the message to the daily life.

To meet such need this series of seven volumes provides an arrangement of the books of the Bible in daily portions, with concise devotional comments. It includes all portions of the Bible most suitable for daily reading, either individually or in family groups.

As a *commentary on the whole Bible*, these volumes will be found valuable because they omit points of merely scholarly interest and fix attention upon the central message of each passage and its application to daily needs. There are frequent references to other parts of Scripture, especially from Old Testament truths to their New Testament fulfilment and interpretation.

Mr. Meyer's life-long experience in interpreting the Bible to the common people makes him pre-eminently fitted for this service—a crowning one in his world-wide ministry by voice and pen.

Introductions and outlines are provided for each Bible book. Review questions have been added at appropriate points, to enable readers to sum up and better preserve in memory what they have learned. The illustrations, selected from paintings of Bible scenes by modern artists, aid in the interpretation of the passages which they portray.

It is hoped that these volumes will prove of much value to Sunday-school teachers and adult scholars; will promote profitable Bible reading in connection with both family and private devotions; and will everywhere deepen a love for and an intelligent acquaintance with the one Book which can provide a fresh and helpful message for the needs of each new day.

CONTENTS

	PAGE
INTRODUCTION	3
DAILY READING OF GOD'S WORD	7
THE BOOK OF GENESIS	9
Outline, 11; Introduction, 12; Comments, 13; Review Questions, 61.	
THE BOOK OF EXODUS	67
Outline, 69; Introduction, 70; Comments, 71; Review Questions, 109.	
THE BOOK OF LEVITICUS	113
Outline, 115; Introduction, 116; Comments, 117; Review Questions, 135.	
THE BOOK OF NUMBERS	137
Outline, 139; Introduction, 140; Comments, 141; Review Questions, 166.	
THE BOOK OF DEUTERONOMY	169
Outline, 171; Introduction, 172; Comments, 173; Review Questions, 194.	
THE BOOK OF JOSHUA	197
Outline, 199; Introduction, 200; Comments, 201; Review Questions, 217.	

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

	ARTIST	
MOSES	<i>Michelangelo</i> ..	FRONTISPIECE
HAGAR IN THE SOUTHERN WILDERNESS	<i>Calderon</i>	FACING PAGE 24
JACOB SERVING FOR RACHEL..	<i>Goodall</i>	40
JOSEPH INTRODUCING JACOB TO PHARAOH	<i>Poynter</i>	56
MOSES IS FOUND	<i>deVriendt</i>	72
DEATH OF PHARAOH'S FIRST- BORN	<i>Normand</i>	82
VICTORY, O LORD	<i>Millais</i>	88
MOSES WITH THE RENEWED TABLES OF THE LAW ...	<i>Herbert</i>	104
THE SCAPEGOAT	<i>Hunt</i>	128
BALAAM PROPHECYING THE STAR OF JACOB	<i>Flandrin</i>	160
JOSHUA APPOINTED TO SUC- CEED MOSES	<i>Schnorr</i>	188

DAILY READING OF GOD'S WORD

The Bible is full of God's wisdom. It is the Word of God. We must read it not only with our head, but with our heart. An analysis of its contents is good and desirable; but when all this is done, we need to allow time for the inner wisdom, power and grace which are stored in the Book, to soak into our inner consciousness. Therefore, for some reasons, it is better to have a shorter portion for daily study, to give us time to get all the juice and marrow out of what we read.

This is the method followed in this system. Busy people, students, commercial men, Sunday-school workers and older scholars, soldiers and sailors, people on the hills and on the prairies, living on the edge of the great tides of human activity, will find these passages, selected for daily reading, ample to furnish a daily meal of truth, and yet deep and wide enough for profound inquiry and interest.

It has always seemed to me that the true way to know the Bible is to read it through. It is only so that we can follow the unveiling of the divine purpose, from the Dawn of Genesis to the Perfect Day of the divine writings of John. It is only so that we can obtain a connected view of the wide scope of Revelation. To read in different, unconnected passages, now of Poetry, now of History, now of Doctrine, prevents the mind from getting proper focus. We are apt by that method to concentrate on a few familiar passages, instead of listening to all that God has spoken to men's hearts. There is, probably, nothing more vital to an accurate knowledge of the Bible than the good

old practice of reading it thoughtfully and steadily through with such brief notes as this volume provides.

But let it always be remembered that the profoundest knowledge of the Word comes from the illuminating grace of the Holy Spirit. Ask him to unlock and unfold its sacred mysteries. Ask him to reveal the glories of our Lord in every chapter. Ask him to enable you to "read, mark, learn and inwardly digest." Ask him, finally, to enable you to become not a forgetful hearer or reader, but a doer of the Word. See to it that your reading is combined with the faith that claims of God the fulfilment, in your own experience, of all he has promised. No prayer, therefore, is more salutary, as you open your Bible, morning by morning, than the familiar old words of the psalmist: "Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law."

F. B. MEYER.

THE BOOK OF GENESIS



OUTLINE OF GENESIS

THE BEGINNINGS OF THE RACE AND OF THE CHOSEN FAMILY

- I. GOD AND THE RACE.....1—11.
 1. *The Beginnings of the World and of
Man*1: 1—2: 25.
 2. *The Beginning and Spread of Evil*..3: 1—6: 7.
 3. *The Judgment and Renewal of the
Earth*6: 8—11: 26.
- II. GOD AND THE CHOSEN FAMILY.....12—50.
 1. *The History of Abraham and His
Son Isaac*11: 27—25: 11.
(The Line of Ishmael, Hagar's Son) .25: 12—18.
 2. *The History of Isaac and Jacob*.....25: 19—35: 29.
(The Line of Esau, Who Sold His
Birthright)36: 1—37: 1.
 3. *The History of Jacob's Sons, Joseph
and His Brothers*.....37: 2—50: 26.
 - (1) *Joseph Sold into Egypt*.....37: 1—36.
(Judah's Sin)38: 1—30.
 - (2) *Joseph's Servitude in Egypt*....39—41.
 - (3) *The Journeys of Joseph's Brothers
to Egypt*.....42—45.
 - (4) *Jacob Goes to Egypt. He and
Joseph Die There*.....46—50.

THE BOOK OF GENESIS

The name is the Greek word for "beginning," and was selected by the translators of the Hebrew Scriptures into Greek. This version was known as the Septuagint (frequently indicated by LXX), because it was said the translators numbered seventy men. It was made for the Jews of "the Dispersion" dwelling in Egypt and elsewhere, who had become unfamiliar with the language of their fathers.

The word "generations" indicates the successive divisions of the book and the gradual concentration of the divine purpose in one special line of ancestry, leading to the development of the knowledge of Jehovah through Israel. Notice this word in 2:4; 5:1; 6:9; 10:1; 11:10; 11:27; 25:12; 25:19; 36:1; 37:2. Each of these verses introduces a new section, in which is traced the "generations," or issue, of the person it names. Ishmael and Esau are side-lines from which the history promptly returns to the line of promise through Isaac and Jacob.

Genesis is the first of the five books of Moses, known as the Pentateuch and also called "the Law." See Luke 24:44; Matt. 22:40; John 10:34. The unanimous testimony of the New Testament is to ascribe the authorship to Moses. See Matt. 19:8; Mark 12:26; Luke 16:31; John 5:46. But he doubtless incorporated sacred traditions handed down from the patriarchs, and there are traces of an editor's hand,—probably Ezra's.

THROUGH THE BIBLE DAY BY DAY

THE BOOK OF GENESIS

1. Beginnings.

Genesis 1:1-5. All beginnings must begin with God. Always put God first. The first stone in every building, our first thought every morning, the first aim and purpose of all activity. Begin the book of the year with God, and you will end it with the glory of the New Jerusalem. At first, as in the physical creation, your heart and life may seem to be "without form and void." Do not be discouraged, the Spirit of God is within you, brooding amid the darkness, and presently his Light will shine through. It is the blessed presence of the Lord Jesus that stirs in your heart and will presently rule your life, John 1:4. His Presence divides between the good and evil. You must distinguish between Christ and self. Follow the gleam, and you shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life. God's days begin in evenings, and always end in mornings.

2. Sky, Earth, Seasons.

Genesis 1: 6-19. There were successive stages in creation. The days probably represent long periods. It is so with the new creation in our hearts. See 2 Cor. 5:17. In nature the clouds that float above us are separated from the waters at our feet so in Christian experience we must seek to quench our thirst not only from below, but from above. See Col. 3:1-4. Our wells must be filled from Heaven. Notice how in creation there are repeated separations, as between Day and Night, Seas and Lands; so as we live in the Spirit, we are quicker

to distinguish not only between white and black, but the different shades of gray. The test of plant-life is the power of reproducing their kind; we are always reproducing ourselves in others, and sowing wheat or poppies. If God maintains suns and planets in bright and ordered beauty he can keep us, Isa. 40: 26, 27.

3. Man Creation's Crown.

Genesis 1: 20-31. Creation reveals God's nature, as the picture the artist. His eternal Power and Godhead are visible in his works. See Rom. 1: 20. And all things and beings were made through Jesus Christ. Consider Col. 1: 15, 16. The hands of the Son of God wove the blue curtains above us and filled them with luminaries. The seas are his and he made them, and filled them with living creatures. The woodlands are the outcome of his mind, and he filled them with flowers and birds. He taught them to live without care. He filled the tiny heart of the mother-bird with love to her young and blessed her. His are the cattle on a thousand hills. He moulded the red earth into his own likeness and made Man. We were made to have dominion. See Psalm 8: 6-8. Ask him to put all things, especially all the evil things of your heart, under your feet. The world is good, and if you were good, you would find it so.

4. Man in Eden. Innocence.

Genesis 2: 1-17. The first paragraph belongs to the previous chapter, as is clear from the use of the same term for God—*Elohim*. God's Rest was not from weariness, or exhaustion, but because his work of Creation was finished. He is ever at work, remember John 5: 17. We enter into his rest, when we cease to worry, and trust him in all and for all. In the 4th verse, Moses incorporates another of those wonderful God-given narratives, which had been handed down from the lips of the patriarchs. It is marked by the use of another term for God—*Jehovah Elohim*. Every man is entrusted with a garden, that he may keep it. God's goodness is no ex-

cuse for idleness. Whether your heart and life shall produce weeds, or flowers and fruits, depends on yourself. Ponder Prov. 4:23; 24:30, 31.

5. Man and Woman. Temptation.

Genesis 2:18—3:8. Human love is God's best gift to man. Without it even Eden would not be Paradise. That Adam was able to name the animals, affixing a title suggested by some peculiarity or characteristic, indicated his royal supremacy, and, in so far as we live in God, that supremacy is restored. See Dan. 6:22; Mark 1:13. But what is power without love, or a throne without a consort? Eve was, therefore, given to crown his bliss; taken from his side, as afterward the Church from the opened side of Christ. See John 19:34, and Eph. 5:25. Still God brings Eve to Adam; and such a marriage is truly blessed.

The order of temptation is always the same. The Tempter without, and within the strong desire for sensual gratification, with the secret hope that somehow the consequences may be avoided. The eye inflames passion; passion masters the resistance of the will; the body obeys its impulse; the act of gratification is followed immediately by remorse and guilt. Then we need the second Adam!

6. God's Condemnation of Adam and Eve.

Genesis 3:9—21. God does not wait for Adam to find his own way back, but hastens in search of him. "Where art thou" is rendered in one version, *Alas for thee*. Jesus met the Tempter not in a garden, but in the wilderness. He suffered being tempted, but has become to all who obey him a Life-giving Spirit, and the Author of Eternal Salvation. Read 1 Cor. 15:45, and Heb. 5:9. The penalty is gone, borne by him in his own body on the Cross. So Paul affirms in Rom. 5:14, etc. Our bias toward evil is counteracted by his indwelling through the Holy Spirit; so we are taught in Rom. 8:1-4. He bruises Satan beneath the feet of those who trust him.

Such is his own assurance in Luke 10:19, and Mark 16:17. He transforms the other results of sin. Through pain the mother's love is drawn out to her child. Hard work is educative and ennobling. Death is the gate of life. Where sin abounded, grace abounds much more.

7. Offerings by Cain and Abel.

Genesis 3:22—4:8. It was good that man should be driven from Eden. Soft comfort enervates. The natives of the South Sea Islands are moral pulp. Man goes forth from the Eden of innocence, of home, of the land of his birth, to create gardens out of deserts, and to become a pilgrim to the abiding City of God. Angels of Love forbid our return. Heaven lies before us, the City gleams with light on the far horizon. For the Tree of Life see Rev. 2:7. The inner motive of Cain's ruthless deed is supplied in 1 John 3:12. Abel, deeply conscious of sin, felt that a sacrifice was needed; therefore his faith saved him and links him with all who believe. See Heb. 11:4. Cain had no sense of sin, and thought a gift of produce enough. But all the while sin was crouching at the door, like a hungry tiger, waiting for the chance to enter. Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation! "Thou shouldst rule."

8. Cain's Career.

Genesis 4:9—26. God's first question to the soul is, "Adam, where art thou?" The next, "Where is thy brother?" We are our brother's keepers. All related to us, within our reach, or needing our help have a claim. We must not take advantage of them. Their well-being and our own are inseparable. God keeps an inventory of his saints, and will avenge them. Their blood will cry to God against those who have wronged them. There is only one cry in the world which is stronger—"the blood of Jesus." See Heb. 12:24. It cries for mercy and pardon. A numerous family sprang from our first parents, and as these intermarried a large population began to people the early seat of human life. Cain founded a

city, dedicated to all that ministered to sensuous enjoyment. This was "the way of Cain," brilliant but godless, away from the presence of the Lord.

9. Posterity of Adam.

Genesis 5:1-24. In contrast to Cain's line in the previous chapter, we have Seth's in this. Note the curious similarity in the names, as though the Cainites professed all that the Sethites held, but lacked the reality and power. There have always been these two families in the world, tares and wheat, goats and sheep. This is an old-world cemetery; we walk among old monuments with time-worn inscriptions. Though the Sethites were God-fearers, they were tinged with Adam's sin. *He* was made in God's image, but they in *his*. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh." We need what is described in Col. 3:10 and Eph. 4:23. The birth of Methuselah seems to have had a profound influence on his father. *After* that he walked with God. Faith will enable us to do the same, because it makes the unseen visible and God real. Go God's way: keep God's pace: talk to him aloud and constantly, as the great Companion.

10. The Wickedness of Men.

Genesis 5:25-6:8. When a son was born to Lamech, he named him Noah, which means "*Rest*." He thought that the boy would grow up to share and alleviate the strain of daily toil. But his hope was premature: rest was not yet: the Deluge would soon sweep over the works of men. The world must await the true Rest-giver, who said, "Come unto *Me*." It was an age of abounding wickedness, but the language describing it is obscure. Some think that "the sons of God" were fallen angels; others that the seed of Seth became joined in marriage with the daughters of Cain. But God's Spirit strove with man, and though a limit was put to his pleadings, yet he sought men with yearning remonstrance, till his Holy Spirit received the final negative and turned away disappointed and grieved. There was

considerable delay. For 120 years the Spirit of God waited. See 1 Pet. 3:20: He will not wait for ever, Luke 13:9.

11. Noah Builds the Ark.

Genesis 6:9-22. Human sin had reached an awful climax. Sooner or later its results must have swept the human race from the earth, as smallpox will slay every native on some infected island. God only hastened by the Flood the inevitable result of wrong-doing. Amid the universal corruption and violence, one man stood out as precious in the sight of God. His name meant Rest; he was righteous toward man and "blameless" toward God; he walked in fellowship with God; his ear was quick to detect, and his hand deft to fulfill the divine will. "By faith Noah . . ." See Heb. 11:7. Such is the character to which God reveals his secrets and with which he enters into covenant. If we live thus we shall cross the flood of death into the resurrection life, 2 Pet. 2:5. Not only shall we be saved, but we shall save others.

12. The Great Flood.

Genesis 7:1-24. What anguish! They climbed the highest story of their towers, then to the hills, but the greedy waters followed them, till the last crag was covered, and all living things in the first homes of human life had perished. Equally sudden and unexpected shall be the days of the Son of Man. See Luke 17:26; 2 Pet. 3:7. But what drowns other men only lifts the child of God nearer his home. The waters bear up the ark. When the loftiest refuges of lies and pride are submerged, and the whole landscape is covered with a monotonous waste of trouble, God says to the soul, "Come into the ark." It is as though he is inside and wants us to enter into close fellowship with himself. See Psalm 27:5. When God shuts the door behind us, no power can force, no skeleton key can unlock, no wedge can pry the door. For the extent of the Deluge it is appropriate to consider Luke 2:1-3. In the Genesis, as in the Luke

passage, "all" may be used in a general rather than an absolute sense.

13. Noah Leaves the Ark.

Genesis 8:1-22. Traditions of the Flood are found in every country, from the tablets of Babylon to the rude carvings of the Aztecs, proving man's common origin. "God remembered Noah." He could not forget, because he had entered into covenant with him and his. Though the floods have been abroad on your life for long years, God has not forgotten you. Sooner might a woman forget her babe! Noah's window only looked upward. It had no outlook on the waters, therefore he sent forth the birds. Dove and raven issued from the same window, so the child of God and the wayward, wilful child may issue from the same family; but the former cannot find satisfaction with what satisfies the other, but wings its flight back to God. See Psalm 116:7. Through God's grace Noah stepped out into the new world—the world of resurrection. His first act was the burnt-offering of consecration, which was followed immediately by promise. See Rom. 12:1, 2.

14. God's Covenant with Noah.

Genesis 9:1-17. As the human race started afresh on its career, God blessed it, as at the first. God always stands with us in a new start. The prohibition against the use of blood in food is often repeated. See Lev. 17:11; Acts 15:29. In a very deep sense, the blood is the life. When we speak of being redeemed by the blood of Jesus, we mean that we have been saved by his sacrificed life. The blood maketh atonement for the soul. But whilst animal life might be used for food or sacrifice, human life was surrounded by the most solemn sanctions. A covenant is a promise or undertaking resting on certain conditions, with a sign or token attached to it. The bow in the cloud, the Lord's Supper, the wedding ring are signs and seals of their respective covenants. Never witness a rainbow without remembering

that as God hath sworn that the waters of Noah shall no more go over the earth, so he will not withdraw his kindness. See Isa. 54:9.

15. Noah's Three Sons.

Genesis 9:18-29. Noah's sin reminds us how weak are the best of men; liable to fall, even after the most marvelous deliverances. The love of strong drink will drag a preacher of righteousness into the dust. But if our brethren sin, let us not parade or tell their faults, but cover them with the mantle of divine love. We may abhor the sin, but let us restore such an one in the spirit of meekness, remembering that we also may be tempted. See Gal. 6:1-4. The *Semitic* races have been the source of religious light and teaching to the world. God has been known in their tents. The *Japhetic* races are the great colonizers and populators of the world, overflowing their own boundaries, and participating in the religious privileges of the Shemites. The progressive ideas of the race of Japheth, which, of course, includes the Indo-European race, have also pervaded the world. The *Hamitic* races, of which Canaan was one, have always gravitated downward.

16. The Confusion of Tongues.

Genesis 11:1-9. Driven by the fear of another deluge, though God had given distinct assurances to the contrary, and impelled by the desire to perpetuate their name and memory to coming generations, Noah's descendants began to build on the plain of Shinar—a fertile valley watered by the Euphrates and Tigris. Babel. Babylon and Babylon the Great, such is the lineage of the apostasy which has ever opposed the Church of God: like a shadow, stealing along the wall at our side. To Babel we must oppose Abraham; to Babylon, Jerusalem; to Babylon the Great, the Bride, the Lamb's wife. "Come out of her, my people," is the cry that rings down the ages. God comes down to see! From him no secrets are hid. All things are naked and open to his

eyes. The one *language* or lip refers to the pronunciation; *speech* to the stock of words; God touched the *lips*. When disunion prevails, destruction follows. But Pentecost and Heaven will undo the wreck of Babel. See Rev. 7:9.

17. The Generations until Abram.

Genesis 11:10-32. The inwardness of the movement of Terah's clan from Ur is given in Acts 7:3. Apparently his father was unwilling for Abram to go alone on his far-pilgrimage, and so the whole family moved along the valley of the Euphrates to the famous ford of Haran. There was no other practicable way by which travelers could strike the route for Canaan. But Terah never advanced beyond that point; and it was only when his father was dead that Abram resumed his march. See Acts 7:4. Let us beware lest the ties of human affection withhold us from entire obedience to the call of God. The word *Hebrew* means "one who has crossed over." It was specially applicable to Abraham. See Genesis 14:13. It may be that you are living on the world's side of the Cross. Come over, though you should have to break dear associations. Be one who has passed through death to resurrection. See Col. 3:1-4.

18. God's Call and Promise to Abram.

Genesis 12:1-9. God's commands are always associated with promises. Count the *shalls* and *wills* here. He does not give his reasons, but he is lavish of his promises. The keynote of Abram's life was *Separation*. Step by step, until country, kindred, Lot, worldly alliances and fleshly expedients were one by one cast aside and he stood alone with God! Though he knew not whither he went, the father of the faithful obeyed, and crossed the wide and perilous deserts. It was this absolute and unquestioning obedience that endeared him to God. Let us ever obey and step out, though it seems as though there were nought but seething mist. We shall

find it solidify under the tread of faith. Read Rom. 4:16; Heb. 11:8. Notice the combination of the Tent and Altar. The tent-life is natural to the man whose portion is God; and where he pitches his tent he will rear his altar.

19. Abram and Sarai in Egypt.

Genesis 12:10-20. It is a comfort that the Holy Spirit permits us to trace the successive stages through which the father of those who believe made his way to the maturity of faith. We all stumble as we step out on the difficult path. But God is patient with his dull scholars and protects them. See Psalm 105:15. It was certain that no weapon formed against him could prosper, nor God's promise fail, yet Abram meanly sacrificed Sarai with his pitiful proposition for his own safety. This doubting outbreak would never have occurred, unless the patriarch had gone down to Egypt, which in Scripture stands for creature-confidence. See Isa. 30:1. The God of glory, who had sent him forth, was responsible for his maintenance in Canaan, even though famine prevailed. He ought to have stayed quietly in the position to which God had called him, leaving the Almighty to provide. Live with God in the heights; and do not go *down* into Egypt.

20. Abram and Lot Part.

Genesis 13:1-13. The patriarch, like a restored backslider, made his way back to the old spot, on the highlands of Bethel, where his first tent and altar had stood. Through his wanderings hitherto there had been a depressing element of worldliness in his camp, through the presence of Lot, who, like many more, was swept along by his uncle's religion, but had little of his own. Feeling that separation was inevitable, and that God would surely care for him, Abram offered Lot his choice. See Psa. 16:5. The younger man chose according to the sight of his eyes. In his judgment he gained the world—but see 2 Pet. 2:7, 8. The world is

full of Lots—shallow, impulsive, doomed to be revealed by their choice and end. "Let there be no strife!" Blessed are the peacemakers! Wherever the interests of peace can be conserved through the sacrifice of your own interests, be prepared to forfeit the advantage, but stand like a rock when God's truth is in balance.

21. Abram at Hebron; Lot Taken Captive.

Genesis 13:14—14:12. Lot lifted up his eyes for himself, but when the last of Lot's followers had streamed out of the camp, God bade Abram lift up his eyes, not to choose, but to behold what God had chosen for him. He must first estimate his possessions, and then enjoy them. Let us count up our treasures in Christ, and use them. Lot grasped at and lost his all. Abram left and inherited all. Notice how prodigal God's provision is. "*All the land . . . for ever . . . as the dust . . . the length and breadth.*" It was a far cry from the valley of the Euphrates to Sodom, and the little confederate kings dared to rebel against Chedorlaomer, who swept over their lands like a sirocco, and marched up the valley of the Jordan, laden with booty, and carrying Lot. You cannot have the sweets of the world and miss its bitters. The path of separation is the only way of safety and peace!

22. Abram and Melchizedek.

Genesis 14:13—24. Recently discovered monuments confirm this narrative of the confederacy of the kings, but do not tell of their overthrow. Abram might fairly have left Lot to reap as he had sown, but his soul yearned over his weak and entrapped relative, and he set himself to deliver him. Men of faith and prayer are still able to rescue those who are taken captive by the devil at his will. Faith subdues kingdoms. The moment of success is always one of danger. The king of Sodom insidiously proposed that they should share the spoils! But how could Abram live as a pensioner on God's care, if he feathered his nest with the tainted

wealth of Sodom? A previous interview had taken place, which made Abram strong. Melchizedek was king and priest of the tribe which held Jerusalem. Read Heb. 7. He brought bread and wine, and a fresh revelation of the character of God, on which Abram rested his soul. What had he to do with Sodom, who was the child of such a Father? Christ always anticipates Satan. See Luke 22:31.

23. Abram's Vision of the Future.

Genesis 15:1-21. Abram had good reason to fear the vengeance of the defeated kings; but the divine voice reassured him. For all of us there is need of a shield, because the world hates us; and for each God will be our compensation for every sacrifice we have made. Refuse to take even the shoe-latchets of Sodom, and God will be your exceeding great reward. The patriarch addressed God as *Adonai Jehovah*, which occurs only twice more in the Pentateuch. Whilst he was pouring out the bitterness of his soul, the stars came out. *Count these*, said his Almighty Friend; and he *believed*. For the first time that mighty word occurs in Scripture, and the Apostle makes much of it. See Rom. 4:9; Gal. 3:6. It was as good as done. Henceforth the patriarch reckoned on God's faithfulness. In olden times covenants were ratified by the parties passing between the pieces of the sacrifice. To give strong consolation, the Almighty confirmed his word with an oath. See Heb. 6:18. But God must wait until the hour for interposition is fully come.

24. Abram's Son Ishmael.

Genesis 16:1-16. Poor Hagar! What contrasts met in her life! Bought in an Egyptian slave-mart, but destined to be the mother of a great people! She is not the last to suffer from the mistakes and sins of God's children, but she was abundantly recompensed. Abram did her a great wrong. Human policy will often suggest a course which seems right in our own eyes, but



Hagar in the Southern Wilderness.

From Painting by PHILIP H. CALDERON. Model in British Artist.

Genesis 16 6-13.

the end is death. How remarkable is the advice given to Hagar by the angel: return and submit! Does not the child of God often seek to evade the cross! "Let me but get away from this intolerable trouble," we cry. But God meets us. "No stranger he to all our wanderings wild!" We have to take up the cross, and sit down again on the hard stool. Some day we shall be permitted to go out, but not till we have learned our lesson perfectly. In the meanwhile, we are assured that our life shall be prolific in great results. In an outburst of awe and joy, the slave-girl learned that God sees and hears. Note 2 Chron. 16:9; 1 Pet. 13:12.

25. God's Covenant with Abraham.

Genesis 17:1-14. At least thirteen years had passed since the promise of Isaac was first made. Years of sorrow and discipline. But God had not forgotten. Always under such circumstances the Eternal voice bids us to walk before him and be perfect. Our surrender must be complete, our obedience absolute, our faith fixed steadfastly on the Promiser. So only can God fulfill his covenant, which includes fruitfulness, the salvation of our households, the inheritance and abundance of spiritual reproductiveness. These promises were made to Abram, being yet uncircumcised, when he was yet a Gentile, proving that they were irrespective of any mere Hebrew interpretation. See Rom. 4:11. But the rite was the sign and seal of the national covenant with the Hebrew race. Spiritually it stands for the separation of the believer; and though the rite passed away with Judaism, its spiritual significance is permanent. See Col. 2:11.

26. Isaac Is Promised.

Genesis 17:15-27. There are two allusions to laughter in these chapters. Sarah's was the laugh of incredulity, see Gen. 18:12; but Abraham's was the laugh of happy confidence, which reckoned on God. As R. V. puts it, he looked his difficulties in the face, and then turned

away to the promise of God, and wavered not, but waxed strong, giving glory to God. Ponder Rom. 4: 20, 21. Therefore, he obtained promises for his wife, for Ishmael, and for the coming child, which was to bear the name of Laughter, partly because of that hour, and also because he would bring sunshine into the old man's life. His heart had entwined about Ishmael. As he had watched the masterful and clever youth, he had said to himself, "He will hold the camp together when I am gone." But the divine covenant could not be with one that had slave-blood in his veins and was not to abide in the house forever. See John 8: 35; Gal. 4: 22. The covenant is always with Isaac.

27. Abraham Entertains Heavenly Visitors.

Genesis 18:1-15. The Son of God is the central figure here. He loves the homes of men. It has ever been his wont to visit the homes and hearts of those who love him. See Prov. 8: 31. Abraham knew well that the High and Lofty One, who inhabits eternity, had come to dwell with him. Others might see only three men, but he recognized his divine friend, addressing him as "My Lord"; and when the two angels went forward alone to do their awful work in Sodom, he entered into close converse with the wondrous central figure, who remained with him still. He gave personal service, and so did Sarah. They gave their very best, *fine, tender, good*. And in their love the Lord found satisfaction and rest. But remember that he still stands at the door and knocks. Ponder John 14: 23; Rev. 3: 20. Christ tells his secrets to those he loves. His proposals and promises are so great that we can almost laugh with incredulity, but the question of v. 14 is answered by Jer. 32: 17. Reckon on God's faithfulness; he cannot fail those who trust him.

28. Abraham Pleads for Sodom.

Genesis 18:16-33. Christ had visited Abraham's tent, but he did more. He trusted him with his se-

crets, and led him almost unconsciously to a degree of faith and prayer that was far beyond what he had hitherto attained. Abraham *seemed* to be driving the Blessed One from point to point, but as a matter of fact, he was being drawn forward. It was so with the woman of Syrophœnicia. God's love and willingness to bless far exceeded Abraham's faith, and when he had gone as far as he dared the divine love went farther and saved Lot from the overthrow. We can never go into the realms of love and compassion, without finding the footsteps of the Redeemer. See Heb. 10:22. Amid all the mysteries of God's moral government we must always believe that he is just and righteous. His throne is encircled by the rainbow, but it is founded in unimpeachable integrity. How low Abraham lay in his self-estimate! They who know most of God do not presume on their knowledge, but esteem themselves the least of saints.

29. Angels with Lot in Sodom.

Genesis 19:1-11. This chapter withdraws the veil from the ministry of angels. The Lord of Angels stayed with Abraham on the heights. He also, in future ages, was to descend into human Sodoms to seek and save the lost, but at present he delegated this work to angels until the fulness of the time was come. The visit of the angels was due to Abraham's prayer. How often do angels speed to our dear ones for whom we have prayed! To that ship laboring in the storm, to that deep, dark forest, to that new settlement, into the slums of that wicked city! Two references in the Gospels to this scene show how carefully it was being watched by the pure and holy eyes of the Son of man. In Matt. 11:23, 24, it seems as though he knew well those streets, and would gladly have passed through them, healing and saving. In Luke 17:28 he adds some further particulars of the careless unconcern of those who would not heed the warnings implied in the story of Genesis 14.

30. Sodom and Gomorrah Destroyed.

Genesis 19:12-23. It was a very weak nature that heaven was so eager to rescue. Though described as a *righteous* man, Lot was a very weak one. He had pitched his tent toward Sodom, but apparently had been unable to resist its attractions, and had gone to live within its precincts. It would almost appear that he had become one of its leading citizens. Therefore, his testimony for God was invalidated and worthless. He seemed as one that mocked, even to his own family. How the angels must have loved this work. There were four people to be saved, and between them, in the human forms they had assumed, there were four hands—one for each. Is not this work in which we all should share? Let us hasten the lingerers! It is fatal to look behind. All our past is strewn with the memories of our sins and failures. There is but one hope. Escape to the Cross of the Divine Redeemer! Shelter in the cleft Rock of Ages! Hasten to the open arms of the Father!

31. Lot and His Daughters Rescued.

Genesis 19:24-29. God had mercy on Lot for Abraham's sake. A missionary told me that when, on writing home to his mother, he narrated his miraculous deliverance from an infuriated mob, she replied by quoting a special entry in her diary to the effect that, during those exact hours, she was detained before God in a perfect agony of intercession for him. Lot was saved from Sodom, but took Sodom with him. He was saved so as by fire, but his life-work was burnt up. See 1 Cor. 3:15. Even his wife might have been saved, but her heart was inveterately wedded to the city. In modern cities there are traces of the sins that doomed Sodom. Let us bear witness against them, that we may arrest inevitable judgment. Jude tells us that in the fate of these cities we have an example of eternal fire. Have a place where you stand before God. Only from that eminence can you venture to look out on the awful retribution of human rebellion.

(For Review Questions on Sections 1-31 see page 61.)

32. Abraham Again Denies His Wife.

Genesis 20:1-18. It is wonderful that Abraham should fall like this. He had walked with God for so many years, and experienced so many deliverances, that we should have expected him to have reached an unsailable position. But the best of men are men at the best; and God, who knows us better than we know ourselves, remembers that we are dust. He often steps in by his providence to intercept the full consequences of our wrongdoing, provided always that our heart is really true to him. There is delightful reassurance in the words, "I withheld thee." God may have to chastise his children for their backslidings, but he will not hand them over to the will of their enemies, nor allow his covenant to fail. He rebukes kings for the sake of his people. See Psalm 105:15. There is a high-toned morality in some who are outside our religious pale, which may put us to shame. It crops up in unexpected places, as here in Abimelech's remonstrance. It was terrible that he was compelled to address Abraham as in v. 9. God has direct dealings with such men, but they need our prayer and help. See vs. 3, 17.

33. Birth of Isaac.

Genesis 21:1-7. God is faithful. Heaven and earth may pass, but his word cannot fail. We may wait until all human hopes have died, and then, at "God's set time," the child is born. Abraham laughed at the first announcement of this event, Gen. 17:17. Later, as Sarah listened to the conversation between her husband and his mysterious guests, she laughed with incredulity, 18:12-15. But now, in the joy of long-deferred motherhood, she found that "the Lord had prepared laughter for her," and so named her child Isaac. See R. V. margin. Be of good cheer. The Lord has prepared laughter for you also, some few miles ahead on life's journey. Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright. O thou afflicted, he shall lay thy stones in fair colors! And when thy joy comes,

rejoice in it. "Thou shalt rejoice in every good thing which the Lord thy God giveth thee." But in those hours think kindly of others, and do not forget that some, like Hagar, may be disappointed by what gives thee joy!

34. Hagar and Ishmael Cast Out.

Genesis 21:8-21. Poor Hagar! She thought that she had given Abraham his heir, but now she found herself and her boy outcasts on the desert waste. The water was soon spent, she little dreamed that a fountain was so near. Cry to God, he will open fountains in the midst of your deserts. Beneath their sad lot a divine purpose was running. God said, "Let it not be grievous in thy sight." This is the teaching of Scripture: that our lives are being ordered and our steps prepared. All we need to be anxious about is the finding of the path. Let us ask God to open our eyes to see the fountains beside us, and the way before us. And after all, was not the wilderness a better training-ground for the lad than the comparative luxury of Abraham's tent? "He became an archer." Isaac would have been the better for a touch of the desert-life. The Holy Spirit, through Paul, gives the inner significance of this incident in Gal. 5:1. See also John 8:36.

35. Abraham and Abimelech Covenant.

Genesis 21:22-34. Abimelech was impressed with Abraham's growing prosperity. He felt that it could not be explained on merely natural grounds. "God is with thee in all that thou doest." He sought, therefore, to secure the well-being of himself and his kingdom by forming an amicable treaty. Abraham immediately indicated that, whilst willing to meet him, they must first have a clear understanding about a certain injustice which he had suffered. As our Lord taught afterward, he showed Abimelech his fault as between them alone. Matt. 18:15. The matter was easily adjusted by the king's frank disavowal of his servants' action. In lieu

of written documents the seven lambs would be a perpetual sign and token of Abraham's claim to the well, henceforth known as "the well of the oath." The tamarisk was the second of these natural title-deeds. Wherever the religious man dwells he should pray, and leave behind him trees and wells.

36. Abraham Ready to Offer Isaac.

Genesis 22:1-13. Faith must be proved. Only in trial does she put forth her strength or dare the impossible. Satan tempts to bring forth the bad, God to call forth into exercise our highest and best. God went every step of the way with his servant, who was called into closer fellowship with himself than any other of the human race. Moriah was a miniature of Calvary, where God spared not his only Son. Abraham's obedience was *immediate*. He arose early in the morning. It was *exact*. It was performed in the spirit of *worship*. It was *contagious*, for Isaac used the same expression to his father, as he to God—"Here am I." Apparently he had no need to acquaint Sarah with the object of his journey, he was so sure that the divine promise could not fail. He said to his young men, "*We* will come unto you." If it were necessary, he knew that God would raise him from the dead. See Heb. 11:19. Isaac asked, "Where is the lamb?" John the Baptist answered in John 1:29.

37. The Promise Sealed with an Oath.

Genesis 22:14-24. It was only at the last moment that the ram was shown and substituted. It is when we get to the mount of sacrifice that God's deliverance is seen. It was when Pharaoh had almost overtaken Israel that their way was cleft through the Red Sea. It was in the early dawn that Jesus came walking on the water. The angel delivered Peter just before the time of his execution. God is never a moment too soon, or too late. What an outburst of blessing! It was a perfect cloudburst! When we have obeyed God to the uttermost and

glorified him in the fires, there is no limit to the fruitfulness or increase with which we shall become enriched. God puts his key into the hands of the faith that absolutely trusts him, saying, "Take what you will." Let us not forget that, as the children of Abraham by faith, we are his heirs, and may reverently lay claim to a share in these glorious promises. See Gal. 3:9.

38. Abraham Buys a Burial Place.

Genesis 23:1-20. Death is an ever-constant monitor that this world is not our home. We rise up from before our dead to confess that we are only strangers and sojourners on the earth. Though the whole country, by God's deed and gift, belonged to Abraham, it had not as yet been made over; hence the necessity for this deliberate purchase with all the stately formalities of the leisured East. Abraham's insistence on buying this grave, and the care with which the negotiations were pursued, show that he realized that his descendants would come again into that land and possess it. It was as though he felt that he and Sarah should lie there awaiting the return of their children and children's children. See also Gen. 49:29, 30. So the graves of the martyrs and of missionaries who have fallen at the post of duty are the silent outposts that hold those lands for Christ, as the graves of the saints await the Second Advent.

39. A Wife Sought for Isaac.

Genesis 24:1-9. It is all-important that the children of God's people should marry only in the Lord. See 1 Cor. 7:39. So only can we hope to perpetuate, as Malachi teaches, a godly seed. But those who live in fellowship with him may confidently count on his angels being sent to co-operate in securing this desirable issue. Every marriage should be a matter for profound concern and much prayer, both for the parents of each, as well as for those that are to be wed. What wonder that so many marriages turn out to be a disappointment and

a curse when they are entered upon so lightly and thoughtlessly! In this graphic chapter we may find a close analogy to the work of the Holy Spirit, who has come forth during the present age to seek a bride for the Son of God, in the Church that he is gathering out of the world. There is always a "peradventure" that the soul may be unwilling at first, but he plies it with overwhelming arguments, as we shall see.

40. Rebekah Meets Abraham's Servant.

Genesis 24:10-27. As we enter upon a new day, or a fresh undertaking, it is always wise and right to ask for good-speed. Good-speed is God-speed. Praying times are not lost times. The reaper saves time when he stops to whet his scythe. Eliezer had learned a sincere respect for his master's piety, and felt that his name was a sure talisman with God. How much more may we ask in the name of Jesus! John 14:13. What a concentration of heaven-contrived circumstances gathered around this event! Abraham planning, the servant praying and waiting expectantly, the Angel of God leading, the very camels kneeling patiently beside the well as though they counted on the troughs being filled, the damsel coming at the precise hour! It is thus that all our daily life might be aglow with the presence and help of God. Such things take place, but, alas, our eyes are holden! Compare *prosper* in Gen. 24:21, 40, 42, 56, with Psalm 1:3. See Acts 10:17.

41. Abraham's Servant Fulfills His Mission.

Genesis 24:28-49. This worthy man was almost garrulous about his master. Count the number of times in which he contrives to introduce those two words, "my master." He put the errand on which he had come before his necessary food, and poured out his story in a stream of crystal utterance, which was the highest eloquence. This identification of his thought and speech with his master's interests is full of teaching for us all. He could talk of nothing else, was only anxious not to

fail for Abraham's sake; and took the favorable reply as kindness shown to him whom he represented. George Herbert caught the same spirit when he spoke of "the aromatic fragrance" of "*My Master*" when applied to Jesus. We, too, are called to be ambassadors, as though God did beseech men by us. If we are in the way of God's will, be sure that the Lord will not only lead, but lead "in the right way," and will create for us a sympathetic reception whither we go.

42. Rebekah Marries Isaac.

Genesis 24:50-67. Rebekah's relatives recognized the hand of God in what had taken place, and could not demur. The maiden herself was not asked, according to Oriental custom, but in her readiness on the following morning to start forthwith, it was clear that her heart had been already won. This favorable reply prostrated Eliezer to the earth with thankfulness. Would that we were always as eager to praise as to pray. The precious gifts with which the whole family were enriched, remind us of those gifts and graces with which the Holy Spirit, the Divine Wooer, enriches the soul that accepts his invitation to yield itself to the Divine Master, Christ. When her friends suggested delay, Rebekah would not hear of it. With his jewels on her person, the young girl longed to see the bridegroom himself. Her "I will go" settled the matter. The foretastes of our heavenly inheritance whet our appetite to see and be with him, whom, not having seen, we love.

43. Abraham's Death and Burial.

Genesis 25:1-18. After being for sixteen years contemporary with his grandsons, Esau and Jacob, Abraham died without owning a foot of land except the cave for which he had paid, as a stranger might. But all was his. He was persuaded of God's faithfulness, and earnestly reached out his hands toward the City with foundations. See Heb. 11:13. He was *full*. Those who had known him in Ur might have looked on his life

as a huge failure, and have spoken of him as a fanatic who had sacrificed all for nothing. But he was satisfied. He was *gathered to his people*, a phrase which does not refer to the body, for his people were far away across the desert, but to the recognition and welcome that awaited him on the other side of death. His sons, Isaac and Ishmael, differed widely. The one dwelt by the well, engaged in pastoral pursuits, whilst the other lived by his own strong hand, in the desert expanse. But they met in their common respect and grief. Births and deaths unite families. We all stand to-day in thankfulness at Lincoln's cradle.

44. Jacob and Esau, Twin Brothers.

Genesis 25:19-34. In the thought of that age, the birthright carried with it the spiritual leadership of the tribe. To be the priest of the family, to stand between the Most High and the rest of the household, to receive divine communications and execute the divine will, and to be in the direct line of the Messiah—such were some of the privileges that gathered around this position. They were nought in Esau's estimation, and he was quite content to part with all they implied, if only he might have the immediate gratification of appetite. The steaming fragrance of the lentil pottage was sweet in the nostrils of the hungry hunter. We have all passed through such an experience. On the one hand, our self-respect, our true advantage, our God; on the other, passionate desire crying, "Give, give." In days and hours like that, beware: for you may say a word or do an act that shall determine your future, and, like Esau, you will find no loophole for altering the cast of the die. See Heb. 12:16.

45. Isaac Is Blessed and Grows Rich.

Genesis 26:1-17. There was no harm in Isaac's going to Gerar, as he had a distinct command to that effect, vs. 2, 3. But he does not seem to have been strong enough to stand the test of residence there. He

might have received into his soul that sufficient grace which is always within the reach of tempted men; but, like so many of us, he looked down and not up. What could have been more reassuring than the promises of the divine presence and blessing! But he was guilty of incredible meanness to the woman who had come so far to be his wife, and of deceit to Abimelech. Notice how the sins of the fathers repeat themselves in the children! It was a disappointing lapse from the glorious height on which he had stood when he yielded himself to God's call on Mount Moriah! But we have experienced the same contrasts within ourselves. Now on the mount of transfiguration, asking to live there, and then in the valley, quarreling for pre-eminence. But, notwithstanding all, God's loving-kindness does not fail. See v. 12.

46. Isaac's Wells and Covenant.

Genesis 26:18-35. It is interesting to follow Isaac in his well-digging. Let us also dig wells and set streams flowing, which will bless men long after we have gone home to heaven. The first well was *Esek—strife*. The second, *Sitnah—hatred*. The third, *Rehoboth—room*. Thus is human life, too often, till it ends with *Sheba—oath or covenant*. But even the outward repose to which life may attain, as the result of the struggles of earlier life, may be interrupted by anxiety and trial, caused by children or grandchildren. Esau's marriage brought endless trouble in its train. And grief of mind will sow life with thorns. Let children take care lest they give needless pain to those who love them. That which hurts tender and true hearts is not likely to carry with it the blessing of God. As soon as a wandering soul gets back to God even his enemies make peace with him; he is at least secure from their hurt. See Proverbs 16:7.

47. Rebekah Plans to Cheat Isaac.

Genesis 27:1-17. This chapter narrates a sad story of the chosen family. Esau is the only character which

elicits universal sympathy. Isaac appears to have sunk into premature senility. It seems hardly credible that he who had borne the wood for the offering up Mount Moriah, and had yielded himself so absolutely to the divine will, would have become so keen an epicure. He could only be reached now through the senses. Perhaps this was due to the prosperity and even tenor of his life. It is better, after all, to live the strenuous life, with its uphill climb, than to be lapped in the ease of the valley. The birthright had been already promised to Jacob, and there was no need for him to win it by fraud; and Rebekah was truly blameworthy in that she deceived her husband, showed partiality toward her children, and acted unworthily of herself. Who would have expected that out of such a family God was about to produce the religious leaders of the world! Pharaoh would one day crave a blessing from those kid-lined hands!

48. Jacob Gets Esau's Blessing.

Genesis 27:18-29. It is better not to attempt to justify Jacob in this act of treachery; but we may learn the deep and helpful lesson, that if God were able to make a saint out of such material as this he also can take our poor lives with all their sin and failure and make something of them for his glory. Notice how one lie led to another! Few who enter on a course of deception stop at one falsehood; and how terrible it was to add blasphemy to lying, as when he said that God brought him his quarry in the hunt. Luther wonders how Jacob was able to brazen it out, adding, "I should probably have run away in terror and let the dish fall." Rebekah kept her son's garments well perfumed with the aromatic plants of Palestine, and their odor awoke the sleeping poetry and fire of the aged father. He compared them to a field of Paradise, filled with the sweet presence of God. Let us see to it that we carry everywhere the fragrance of Christ. See 2 Cor. 2:15.

49. Esau's Grief and Anger.

Genesis 27:30-45. Esau apparently had awakened to realize the value of the blessing of the birthright which he had treated so lightly. His exceeding great and bitter cry expressed the anguish of one who awakes to discover that he has forfeited the *best* for a trifle. But obviously, he was only being held to his own original contract with Jacob. There are similar events in all lives when we take some irrevocable step under the sway of evil passion, and it affects the whole future. There is "no place for repentance"—*i. e.*, no opportunity of altering the decisive effect of that act. See Heb. 12:17. We may obtain some lower and inferior blessing, as Esau did, acquiring something of the fatness of the earth and the dew of heaven, living by our sword, and finally, after long years, shaking the yoke from our neck, but we can never be what we might have been! We can never undo that moment of sowing to the flesh. See Gal. 7:7, 8.

50. Jacob Sent Away from Home.

Genesis 27:46-28:9. Esau deferred the execution of his murderous purpose, because of the near approach, as he supposed, of his father's death. But Isaac lived for forty years after this. His secret purpose, however, became known to Rebekah. See Prov. 29:11. The ostensible reason for Jacob's expatriation which Rebekah gave her husband was not the real one. He was sent to Haran, not primarily for a wife, but to escape his brother. Does not this constant duplicity explain the reason of Rebekah's heart-weariness? It seems probable that she never saw her favorite son again. The benediction already pronounced on Jacob was repeated with greater amplitude and tenderness as he left his father's tent. Sad as he was in the inevitable wrench, the star of hope shone in the sky, beckoning him onward. It was necessary that he should be taken from under his mother's influence into that greater world, where, through pain and disappointment, he

should become a prince with God. Often our nest is broken up that we may learn to fly.

51. Jacob's Vision at Bethel.

Genesis 28:10-22. This is the Ladder chapter, in which a wayward, weak man is seen holding fellowship with the Eternal God, who loves us, notwithstanding our unworthiness, and desires to lead us into a life of power and blessedness. It is all wonderful! Notice the four *Beholds!* vs. 12-15. *Sunset.* Overtaken on a moor by the swift fall of the Oriental night, Jacob had no alternative than to sleep in the open. But he slept to see! *Night.* There is an open way between heaven and earth for each of us. The movement of the tide and circulation of the blood are not more regular than the inter-communication between heaven and earth. Jacob may have thought that God was local: now he found him to be omnipresent. Every lonely spot was his house, filled with angels. *Morning.* Worship, consecration, the vows of God. Put down thy foot on God's promises. He will do more than he has said. Thou shalt come to thy Father's house in peace.

52. Jacob in Laban's Home.

Genesis 29:1-20. Well might Jacob lift up his feet! See margin. When we are sure of God we receive strength that enables us to *run* with patience the race that is set before us. The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord, and we have a special claim on his guidance in our matrimonial alliances—the most solemn and momentous step of all. There were many good qualities in Rachel, fitting her to be a good wife. Her humility and industry, her patience under the oppression of the unmannerly shepherds, her haste to share her joy with her father—all these elicited Jacob's love. What a touch of old-world and new-world poetry is in those words of verse 20! Where Love is queen time is too short, labor never hard, distance never long, sacrifice unheard of! Oh, that we so loved our Lord, that

for the missionary toiling through long years, and the invalid condemned to a life of pain, affliction might appear light and but for a moment.

53. Jacob Marries Leah and Rachel.

Genesis 29:21-35. The chief lesson of this paragraph is its illustration of the awful nemesis which accompanies wrongdoing. No thoughtful person can watch the events of history or experience without realizing that we are already standing before the judgment-seat of God, and that his sentences are in process of being executed. Jacob deceived his father, and was himself deceived. "With what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again." What disappointments there are in life! We think that we are to be dowered with Rachel, and lo! Leah is substituted; but in after-days Jacob spoke of Reuben as his might, the beginning of his dignity and excellency. The names of Leah's sons suggest the blessings that accrue through heart-break. For the *Leahs* of the world there are great compensations. God remembers and hears them. Broken-hearted and forsaken, they live again in the lives of those whom they have borne either naturally or spiritually.

54. Sons Born to Jacob.

Genesis 30:1-24. The details of this paragraph are given with great minuteness, because they concern the twelve sons of Jacob, the forefathers of Israel. After all, history is made in the nursery, and we are very much what our mothers have made us in the formative years. An old Spanish proverb says, "An ounce of mother is worth a pound of clergy." Leah's influence on her boys, as judged by their subsequent life, was anything but healthy; yet with Jacob being the man he was, there was poor chance for them to realize the highest ideals. Rachel's anguish of heart led her to earnest prayer. Compare vs. 1 and 22. Wait on God, oh, anguished ones: ye shall surely have reason to praise him. Was it not worth waiting for, to bear a Joseph,



Jacob Serving for Rachel

From Painting by Leupold & T. Goodart. Modern Brush Artist.

Genesis 29, 18-20.

whose branches were to run over the wall in blessing? There are more compensations in life than we think for. If Rachel had her husband's love, Leah had a large family of boys. In the saddest lives there are glints of sunshine.

55. Jacob's Flocks Increase.

Genesis 30:25-43. There is little in this story to the credit of Jacob, and nothing to choose between him and Laban. They are well matched one against another; and if anything, Jacob excelled in cunning. The heir of the promises deals with the child of this world on the principles of which men of honor would refuse to make use. We feel inclined to pity Laban, who had never seen the angel-ladder, or shared the great promises which had surrounded the path of his relative. He trusted this man of the chosen tribe, but was to be woefully deceived. But are there not many professing Christians who are playing Jacob's part to-day? Whilst holding high positions in the religious world, they stoop to practices to which men of the world would be no parties. We hear but little more of Laban, but Jacob is destined to pass through the fire of trouble, by which the dross will be consumed and his soul made white and purified.

56. Jacob Leaves Laban.

Genesis 31:1-21. Jacob was a remarkable mixture. He had an eminently religious nature, and had intimate dealings with God. Note vs. 3, 5, 7, 18. But he grossly misrepresented God's dealings with him when he gave his wives the reasons on which he proposed flight. Note vs. 9, 13. So the flesh and spirit struggle for mastery within us all, and only as the grace of God enters our hearts can we come into the absolute supremacy of the spiritual and divine, Gal. 5:17. The secret departure was very undignified and unworthy of the heir of the promises. The command to return was of God, and what he commands he becomes responsible for. Besides, had not the Almighty promised to keep him in

all places? See 28:15. When we are on God's plan, we may reckon on him absolutely.

57. The Dispute Between Laban and Jacob.

Genesis 31:22-42. These chapters afford a remarkable insight into God's forbearance. He knew what was in Jacob's heart, and could see all its weakness and deceit. There was not a thought in his heart or a word on his tongue, but He knew them altogether. Yet God cast the mantle of forgiveness and defence around this most unworthy soul, bidding Laban not to speak to him either good or bad. Indeed, in a later book, we are told, "He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath he seen perverseness in Israel." Not that the holy God was unaware of the evil traits in his child, but that he refused to dwell on them, or to allow himself to be turned away from his purposes of grace. Rachel secretly carried with her the teraphim, which wrought evil throughout the home in after-years, as we shall see. The "fear of Isaac" was on Jacob's lips, but too little of it in his character and surroundings!

58. The Covenant Between Jacob and Laban.

Genesis 31:43-55. In our time covenants are engrossed on parchment, so that there may be written documentary evidence accessible, to prove that certain transactions have taken place. The same object was conserved, where the art of writing was confined to the few, by the erection of monuments, whose existence was associated with the agreements into which men had entered with one another. Though these two men were far below the Christian ideal of character, it is evident that they lived in an habitual recognition of God and the eternal sanction of his presence. The Lord was to watch between them. God was to be witness and judge. The third generation looked back on the days of Terah with reverential awe and loyalty, and commemorated their grandfather Terah's God.

59. Jacob Fears to Meet Esau.

Genesis 32:1-12. Before we encounter our Esaus we are sure to meet God's angels. If only our eyes are not holden we shall perceive them. The world is full of angel help! There are more for us than against us! The Captain of the Lord's hosts is as near us as he was to Joshua, and his squadrons await our cry. "Thinkest thou," said our Lord, "that I cannot beseech my Father, and he shall even now send more than twelve legions of angels!" In times of trial we betake ourselves to God, and are justified in claiming his protection, so long as we can show that we are on his plan and doing his will. It was the news brought by his messengers of Esau's approach that elicited from Jacob this marvelous prayer; but his prayer did not prevent him making what plans he could for the safety of his dear ones.

60. Jacob Wrestles and Prevails.

Genesis 32:13-32. There is a fulsomeness in Jacob's address to Esau, which sounds inconsistent with the noblest manhood and the firmest faith. Why should he speak of "my lord" Esau, and endeavor to appease his wrath with soft speeches and rich gifts? Evidently much had to be effected in his character before he could become one of the great spiritual forces of the world, and his supreme discipline came in that midnight wrestle. The Angel who wrestled with him could have been none other than the Son of man, who is also the Angel of the Covenant and Son of God. It was not that Jacob wrestled with the Angel, but that the Angel wrestled with him, as though to discover and reveal his weakness, and to constrain him to quit reliance on his own strength and to learn to cling with the tenacious grip of a lame man, who dare not let go, lest he fall to the earth. Ah, it is well to be even maimed, if through the withered thigh we may learn to lay hold on the everlasting strength of God, and learn his secret Name!

61. Jacob and Esau Reconciled.

Genesis 33:1-17. Many things, like this meeting with Esau, are worse in anticipation than in actuality. The brothers were on the same old terms as before that filching of Isaac's blessing. The holy transactions of the previous night had induced this change in the atmosphere. If our ways please the Lord, he will make our enemies to be at peace with us. We must win power with God, by yielding to him, before we can have power with our Esaus and prevail. When you fear man's wrath, do not run hither and thither for defence; be still and fear not. Commit your way to the Lord and read Psalm 37. When the enemy comes in like a flood, the Lord shall lift up a standard against him. Surely Jacob needed not to fear, or make these lame excuses and promises. He never intended to go to Esau, to Seir. As soon as the last ranks of his brother's men were lost in the desert haze, he turned to go in the contrary direction. This duplicity was not worthy of the heir of the promises; but too many of us would have done the same, even on the morrow of the Jabbok-wrestle.

62. Jacob with the Shechemites.

Genesis 33:18-34:17. Jacob was tempted by the fat pastures of Shechem, without thought or care of the character of its people, and he lived to bitterly rue his choice. How many religious parents have made the same mistake! They first encamp near the world, pitching their tent doors in that direction; then they buy a parcel of land, and finally their children contract alliances that end in shame and disaster. He who came of a pilgrim race, and to whom the whole land had been given by promise, bought real estate right against Shechem, one of the worst cities in the country. Like Lot, Jacob bid high for wealth and worldly advancement, risked the highest for the lowest, and was saved as by fire. Poor Dinah! Yet she was more sinned against than sinning. Jacob had put her in jeopardy

by his selfish policy; and Leah was not blameless, for she had let her go unwarned and unaccompanied into the midst of that furnace of trial.

63. Jacob's Sons Spoil the Shechemites.

Genesis 34:18-31. It is not easy to steer our family life amid the rocks and quicksands of present-day worldliness; but we shall not prosper by using the world's weapons of duplicity and craft. The true way is to make our homes so attractive that our children will not be tempted to court the alliances that are offered by those whose only portion is in this life. Our Ruths would not leave our fields if we dropped more handfuls on purpose for them. The treachery of these two brethren was absolutely inexcusable. On his dying-bed Jacob reverted to it, and pronounced their scattering in Israel. Though Levi undid that curse by his obedience and devotion, Simeon seems to have made no effort in that direction, and soon became as water absorbed by the desert-sands. But see Rev. 7:7. What an awful thing it is when our conduct is such as to make religion offensive to those who observe our behavior. Verse 30.

64. Jacob Blessed at Bethel.

Genesis 35:1-15. Thirty years before Jacob was at Bethel. Life was young then. He had only his staff. The future was unshaped and unknown. It was on the occasion of his first night from home; and he made many vows. How much had happened since then! Marriage, prosperity, children! But he had drifted down the stream, and had traveled into the far country from God. It was well that he should get back to Bethel, and consider the whole story of his life, as you may trace a river from source to mouth from an overlooking hill. The divine summons is always bidding us be clean and change our garments, and be rid of idols. There God gave him the great new name of Israel; and took to himself the reassuring name of El-

Shaddai. It was as though, as the Almighty, he pledged himself to realize the highest and best. Let us take heart! God will make us fruitful, will give us the land, and will ward off the results of our misdeeds. Verse 5.

(For Review Questions on Sections 32 to 64 see page 62.)

65. Jacob's Sons; Esau's Sons; Isaac's Death.

Genesis 35:16-29; 36:1-8. From Bethel to Bethlehem is not far. The one, the House of God; the other, the House of Bread. We need them both, if we are to bear up under the repeated shocks of life, such as the death of the old nurse Deborah, the death of our beloved Rachels, the sins of our children, and the break-up of the old home, as when our father is borne to his grave. Well was it for Jacob that he had got right with God before these repeated waves broke upon him. Isaac had not lived a great life, but his full years gave him a claim on the veneration of his sons, who forgot their jealousies and feuds as they stood together at his bier. But how greatly men misjudge death. It is not the end, but the beginning. We find hereafter Isaac associated with Abraham and Jacob, as welcoming the saints homeward. Death greatens good men!

66. Joseph Loved and Hated; His Dreams.

Genesis 37:1-11. It is a mistake for parents to show favoritism; but we can hardly wonder at Jacob's partiality for the lad, who reminded him so vividly of the beloved Rachel. Besides, there were a purity and an elevation of spirit in Joseph that stood out in welcome contrast to the coarse brutality and impurity of the others. He was separate from his brethren, 49:26. The coat of many colors was, as R. V. margin indicates, a long garment of delicate texture, with sleeves, that was the dress of the young princes or nobles, who were not called to the menial toil of the field or household. The dreams of youth are proverbial and prophetic. In this case it would have been wiser for the lad to have kept his secrets locked in his own heart, though it was a

tribute to his simplicity and ingenuousness that he must needs disclose them. The suggestion of coming greatness aroused his brothers' sharpest envy, but the hands of the Mighty One upheld the lad, 49:23.

67. Joseph's Brothers Plot His Death.

Genesis 37:12-24. Throughout Joseph was a very remarkable type of our Lord. There was, first, this mission of the beloved son to inquire after the well-being of his brethren, which reminds us so vividly of the advent of God's Beloved and Only Begotten Son, who brought us the Father's greeting, and came to see and know by personal inquiry how we fared. Dothan was in the northern portion of the land, and the journey must have taken time and strength; but he persisted until he found them, and came where they were. Their plot against their helpless brother was as the plot of Caiaphas and the rest against our Lord. Pilate knew that for envy they had delivered him into his hands. The pit was one of those rock-hewn cisterns that abound in Palestine, and as there was no water in it Joseph's life was not sacrificed; and there he awaited what was a kind of resurrection. The scene at the pit's mouth was recalled by Joseph in 42:9; and was never forgotten by the others, 42:21, 22.

68. Joseph Sold into Egypt.

Genesis 37:25-36. It was not chance, but providence, that brought these Midianites to the pit at that hour. They had, of course, fixed their time of departure from their native land, the speed at which their camels were to travel, and the amount of time which they would spend at the fairs and markets *en route*, quite irrespectively of all other considerations but their own profit and convenience; yet quite unconsciously they were moving according to a divine timetable. Everything in life is directed, superintended and controlled by a divine forethought. Let us live in constant recognition of this! You may be in a pit

of dark misery, but God knows that you are there, and times the moments. Only continue to trust and do not be afraid! Blessed are they that believe, to them there shall be a performance. Months ago a caravan started, which will arrive at the precise hour when intervention will best serve you.

69. Joseph in Potiphar's House.

Genesis 39:1-18. Ungodly families and employers owe more than they realize to the presence in their homes and businesses of those who love God; for God comes with his servants. See vs. 2, 21, 23, and Acts 7:9. But those who would enjoy that accompanying Presence must resist and overcome the appeals of the flesh. Days of outward prosperity are those in which we are most keenly tempted. The most venomous serpents coil in the damp heat of tropical forests. When temptation and opportunity meet, our case is hard indeed. At such times only God's grace can hold us back. As temptation presents itself again and again, it gives us opportunities of continued growth in strength and grace. Joseph had probably wrought out his noble answer in his own secret heart, and had lived by it, weeks before he flashed it forth. In the critical hour the mouth blurts out what the heart has been meditating. They who can rule themselves will be presently trusted to rule others.

70. Joseph Fares Well in Prison.

Genesis 39:19-40:8. These two men remind us of the two thieves crucified beside our Lord; to the one he was a savor of life, to the other of death. Jeremy Taylor says that he must be in love with peevishness who chooses to sit down on his little handful of thorns, when there are so many causes that call for him. Wherever in the world we are, there is a fellowship of sad and lonely hearts for us to cultivate. Like Joseph, let us set about helping others, and so find solace and help for ourselves. We must move in and out among

our fellows with "a glorious morning face." Keep your sorrows for your Lord and yourself, but learn from your own experiences how to comfort those who are in any sorrow by the comfort with which you yourself have been comforted of God. How quick Joseph was to detect the added anxiety on the two faces! It was because he had known similar alternations of experience. See 2 Cor. 1:4.

71. Joseph Interprets Two Dreams.

Genesis 40:9-23. Joseph as an interpreter was among a thousand. Because his pure heart was open to God, he could unriddle the mysteries of human life. Very often those who walk with God can solve and explain the dark riddles of human life for the less enlightened. Joseph was keenly alive to God's presence. It filled the prison with glory. He knew that thence must come all their hope and expectation; and God was "in the shadow, keeping watch above his own." He was contriving and superintending the chain of events which were to set his young servant on the throne. Man had despised and rejected him, but God had already prepared for him a position of honor and usefulness, to which his ministry to these men was as rungs in the upward ladder. Do not neglect small acts of ministry. Faithfulness in the very little leads to the throne-life. The butler's forgetfulness reminds us of our shameful forgetfulness of the Redeemer, who has brought us up out of the pit, and redeemed us with precious blood. Yet he said: "This do in remembrance of me."

72. Pharaoh Dreams of Cattle and of Ears of Grain.

Genesis 41:1-13. This chapter tells of ascension and exaltation, and affords an inimitable type of the issue of our Lord's humiliation and death. Like Joseph, he went and preached to spirits in prison, and then God highly exalted him, and gave him a Name above every name. Rejected by his brethren, refused by

those to whom he was sent, falsely accused and condemned, classed with the wicked, thrust into prison, rescuing one of his poor associates, called to a throne, it would be possible in almost every particular to substitute the name of Jesus for that of Joseph. What a corroboration of those great words of Asaph, "Neither from the east, nor from the west, nor yet from the south cometh lifting up; but God is the judge," Psalm 75:6, 7. When sorrow falls, how quickly the world remembers the child of God, and turns to him! Those that despise and forget will seek you out some day.

73. Pharaoh's Dreams Interpreted.

Genesis 41:14-36. Notwithstanding the great urgency of the royal summons, and the speed with which the great events of his life crowded on one another, Joseph was kept in perfect peace. He found time to shave, and to change his raiment. Let us be at rest in God. He that believeth does not make needless haste. One of the loveliest traits in Joseph's character was his humility. He did not take on airs, nor assume superiority, nor pose as a superior and injured person. He said simply, "It is not in me; God will give." These words might have been uttered by our Lord; they are so perfectly in harmony with the tenor of his life. Surely we should appropriate them. At the best we are but God's almoners, passing on to others the good things of which he has made us the stewards. Joseph was set on using all he had, not for himself, but for others; therefore he had more and more to give.

74. Joseph, Exalted, Prepares for Famine.

Genesis 41:37-57. The Spirit of God was evidently in Joseph, but so far from rendering him a mere visionary, it made him eminently practical. Have your visions of God, but descend from your housetop to answer the men who knock at your door! See Acts 10. In this story we see reflected the glories of our Lord, who was

raised to the throne, to become a Prince and a Saviour, the Giver of the Bread of Life to the perishing souls of men. But he sells without money and without price! Joseph's marriage to an Egyptian bride reminds us of our Lord's union with the Gentile Church, on the significance of which Paul so strenuously insists. If you live for God, he will see to your interests. Such joy will be yours that you will forget your sorrows (Manasseh) and become fruitful in the land of affliction (Ephraim).

75. Joseph Sees His Ten Brothers.

Genesis 42:1-17. The true interpretation of Joseph's treatment of his brethren is to be found in the supposition that he repeated toward them, as nearly as possible, the behavior that they had shown to himself at the pit's mouth, and this with no thought of retaliation, but that their consciences might be awakened, and that he might discover if they would deal differently with Benjamin than they had dealt with him. He needed to be sure of their repentance before he could trust himself to them again. His purpose therefore was in part secured when he heard them saying to each other in the dear old home-tongue, which they never expected him to understand, "We are verily guilty because of our brother." So God deals with us. The east wind blows bitterly in our faces, the famine is behind and the harsh governor before. All these things are hard to bear; but behind them is the tenderest love, which struggles with its tears and is only eager to get us right before entrusting itself to us.

76. Simeon Held; the Others Sent Home.

Genesis 42:18-38. The behavior of this great Egyptian official—for so the brethren deemed him—must have seemed very hard and tyrannical to the trembling shepherds from the far land of Canaan. They had no idea that he understood what they said, and turned away to weep. But we can read his inner meaning. He must

secure their return, so he kept Simeon bound. He wanted to see the beloved Benjamin, and to test their behavior to him, so he threatened that they should not see his face unless their youngest brother accompanied them. He gave to them of his kindly care in the gift of provisions and the return of their money. It was natural that the old father heard their story with failing heart—"All these things are against me." Nay, in all these things was the life of the Spirit, and in all these things we are more than conquerors. See Rom. 8:37.

"Judge not the Lord with feeble sense,
But trust him for his grace;
Behind a frowning providence
He hides a smiling face."

77. The Brothers Return with Benjamin.

Genesis 43:1-15. Joseph, in giving corn to save his own brethren and the Egyptians from starvation, is a type of our Lord, who gives the bread of life to Jew and Gentile—to all that come to him in their hopeless need. And in this return of the full money in the sacks we are reminded that salvation is without money and without price. Whatever we bring to enrich Christ he returns to us. His gifts are all of his unmerited grace and favor. Very often we move forward with dread into the unknown; but that dread is the child of ignorance. If only we realized that love is waiting for us there, which does not ask for balm and honey, for spices and myrrh, but just for ourselves, how much happier life would become! Lift up your hearts; a feast awaits you!

78. Joseph Feasts His Brothers.

Genesis 43:16-34. Our Saviour, of whom Joseph was such a striking emblem, knows all about us. Though we may fear him with a great fear, he is providing for us with a thoughtful tenderness, which adapts itself

to our every need. There is water for travelled feet; the benediction of peace for troubled hearts; a feast for hungry souls; tears of love for Benjamin; and a consideration of our very sitting at his table, which reveals his perfect knowledge of us. He waits to manifest himself as he does not to the world. The only thing that can separate is unconfessed sin. But just so soon as this is put away, the flood gates are opened and heart commingles with heart. Do not his mercies lead us to repentance?

79. Joseph's Cup in Benjamin's Sack.

Genesis 44:1-17. It is a terrible revelation when our Benjamins are found possessed of the cup. They have been so loved, so favored, so screened; they have never been guilty of the excesses of Reuben and Judah; they have given no rise to evil reports, like the sons of Bilhah and Zilpah, 37:2. Now when *they* are convicted of sin, the surprise of their brethren is only equalled by their own remorse. This accounts for the soul agony of men like Cyprian, Augustine, Bunyan and Spurgeon. What transitions there are in life! At the close of the previous chapter the brothers were as happy as they could be, and here plunged into the deepest anguish. But the intensity of their pain and sorrow, like fire, melted and cleansed them, and prepared for the great reconciliation.

80. Judah Pleads for Benjamin.

Genesis 44:18-34. No portion in Genesis could be more suitable for Good Friday. Judah's proposal to give himself instead of Benjamin reminds us of him who freely gave himself up for us all. It was with such love, but of infinite intensity, that Christ loved us. In Judah's words we find the loftiest type of pleading which man has ever put forth for man. It is extraordinary to get this glimpse of the strong and noble emotions that slumber in hearts where we should least expect them! But these words are poor and cold

compared with those that Jesus utters on our behalf. It must have required extraordinary self-command on Joseph's part to make his brethren suffer thus. But he dared to enforce it, because he knew the goal they were approaching. Christ often turns aside to hide his sorrow at our griefs, which are the necessary pathway to where all tears are wiped away.

81. Joseph Makes Himself Known to His Brothers.

Genesis 45:1-15. It may be that we have here an exact representation of a scene which shall be transacted some day, when our Lord makes himself known to his brethren, the Jews. The Apostle Paul tells us that ultimately all Israel shall be saved; and may not this be brought about, when he says to them, "I am Jesus, your brother, whom ye delivered up and denied in the presence of Pilate"? Was not Joseph's wife rejoiced by his joy, and will not the Church of the redeemed be glad when that great reconciliation takes effect? What a beautiful interpretation Joseph put on their act of treachery—"God did send me before you." Let us always trace God's plan in the malevolence and opposition of men. They could have no power at all, unless it were given them from above. Joseph supplied all their needs—wagons to carry, food to nourish, raiment to clothe, and greetings to welcome!

82. Joseph Sends for His Father.

Genesis 45:16-28. This is indeed an Easter lesson. It must have seemed to Jacob and his children as though Joseph were indeed risen from the dead. Hardly more startling were the appearances of the risen Lord than the news carried back to Jacob that his long-lost and much-mourned son was the prime minister of Egypt. Joseph had not forgotten his father. His one desire was to bring him to share his glory. For this he sent the wagons to transport the whole family to his side. At first Jacob was incredulous. It seemed too good to be true. But when he saw the wagons that Joseph

had sent, that touch of delicate thoughtfulness, in such striking contrast to the cheerless isolation and loneliness of the last few years, caused his aged spirit to revive. Let us talk of the glory of our risen and ascended Lord, and specially of his desire that where he is we may be also. Now let us thank him that he is not only willing to receive us, but provides the grace and help of the Spirit to transport us thither.

83. Jacob and His Family Go to Egypt.

Genesis 46:1-27. Evidently Joseph's invitation to his father to come to him in Egypt aroused very earnest questionings in Jacob's soul. Was it a wise step for him to take? Perhaps he remembered *Genesis 15:13*, and dreaded to take the risk. Under these circumstances he went to Beersheba, the well of the oath, so intimately associated with the lives of Abraham and Isaac, and from which he had gone forth on his life's pilgrimage. There he offered special sacrifices and received special directions and promises. He was not only to go down into Egypt, but to go there under the divine guidance and protection. When we visit Egypt at our own impulse we shall land ourselves, as Abraham and Isaac did, in temptation and failure; but when God bids us go, we may make the journey with absolute impunity. Though we walk through the dark valley, we need not fear, if he be with us.

84. Pharaoh Welcome's Joseph's Relatives.

Genesis 46:28-47:12. What a meeting between father and son! If the old man were sitting in the corner of the lumbering wagon, weary with the long journey, how he must have started up when they said, "Joseph is coming!" What pathos there is in the expression, "wept a good while," as though the long-pent-up streams took a long time to exhaust themselves. Had Joseph been less noble he might have shrunk from introducing his lowly relatives to the mighty Pharaoh! But such thoughts were submerged in the great love

which claimed that withered, aged, halting man as his *father*. Let us never be ashamed of our Saviour, who has done more for us than even Jacob for his sons. This confession that the days of his pilgrimage had been few and evil is set to a sad minor chord; and to the superficial gaze Esau had enjoyed a much more prosperous career; but when Jacob stood before Pharaoh the mighty monarch recognized his moral supremacy, and bent beneath his benediction. Surely the less is blessed of the greater. Here was the harvest of his tears!

85. Egyptians Saved in Famine.

Genesis 47:13-26. The slender stores of the Egyptians were soon exhausted, and had it not been for Joseph the streets would have been filled with the dying and dead. His Egyptian name means "the saviour of the world"; and the confession of the Egyptians proved how true it was: "Thou hast saved our lives." How closely the parallel holds! Joseph rose from the pit and the prison to save his brethren as well as the myriads of his adopted fellow-countrymen: Jesus rose from the grave to be a Prince and a Saviour. Joseph's bread cost him nothing, whilst Jesus gave us that which cost him Calvary. Joseph sold his corn for money; our Lord gave himself without money or price. You may go to him without reluctance, though your sack is empty and you have no money in your hand; but he will give and give again, without stint.

86. Joseph Visits His Dying Father.

Genesis 47:27-48:7. How inexorable is the *must* of death! For many years Jacob had exceeded the ordinary span of human life, and now, like the last apple on the tree, he must be gathered. For seventeen years he had been familiar with Egypt's splendid temples, obelisks and pyramids; he had been surrounded with all the comforts that filial love could devise; but nothing could make him forget that distant cave in the land of



Joseph Introducing Jacob to Pharaoh.

Genesis 47 : 7-10.

From Painting by Sir Edward J. Poynter. Modern British Artist.

Canaan. In his judgment Egypt's most splendid pyramid was not to be compared with that humble sepulchre where the mortal remains of Abraham and Sarah, of Isaac and Rebekah, and of the faithful Leah awaited his. On Joseph's second visit he was weaker, and with an effort nerved himself for the interview. The angel-ladder and Rachel's death stood prominently out before the dying eyes. When he returned from this pathetic reverie he turned to the two boys who stood awestruck beside him and adopted them, for their beloved father's sake.

87. Jacob Blesses Joseph's Sons.

Genesis 48: 8-22. By his act in blessing them, Jacob reversed the verdict of birth, and gave the younger the birthright. Probably there were qualities in Ephraim which naturally put him in the foremost place. The Bible is full of hope for younger sons. He spoke of the Angel, Jehovah, so often referred to in the Old Testament, and who can be no other than the Son of God. He also is *our* Shepherd, Guardian and Friend. He will feed and tend us all our life long. He will redeem us from all evil and bring us to a blessed end in peace. Be of good cheer! He cared for you in your helpless infancy and will do no less in your helpless old age. If any lads hear this portion read let them notice that old Jacob prayed God to bless the lads. Evidently then, no little lad is too small for God to notice and bless! Though the fathers die, God lives and will bring us again to "the land of the leal."

88. Jacob Foretells the Future of His Sons.

Genesis 49: 1-13. Once more Joseph visited his father's dying-bed. This was the third time and the last. He stood as one of twelve strong bearded men, gathered around the aged form, whose face was shadowed by death, but aglow with the light of prophecy. How intense their silent awe as they heard their names called one by one, by the old man's trembling voice, speaking

with difficulty! The character of each was delineated with unerring insight: the outstanding incidents of their past history enumerated and their future forecasted. The scene was an anticipation of the final judgment, where men shall hear their lives reviewed and the sentence passed. Shiloh means Peace-Giver. What a fragrant name for our Lord! What wonder that he shall gather the nations to his cross and throne!

89. Joseph Specially Blessed.

Genesis 49:13-27. The position of Zebulun and the following tribes in the land of promise is accurately foretold. Compare the allotments of Joshua 18. Notice the exclamation of the dying man in verse 18. Such a spirit of waiting cannot be disappointed. See Isaiah 26:8, 9. Joseph's blessing is pre-eminently beautiful: *Fruitful!* This is mentioned twice, reminding us of John 15:8. But fruitfulness is only possible where there is the *wall* for separation, and the *well* for communion. When these are present, the branches droop over the wall with clusters of blessings to a thirsty world. Let us seek divine strength and ask that the mighty hands of the God of Jacob may be placed under our own poor weak hands! See Psalm 141:1. The separated life is the crowned life. To the heart of the dying man came the memory of his native land and its mountains. What mountains are to a country, God is to his people!

90. Jacob's Last Directions and Death.

Genesis 49:28-50:3. Jacob gave a final charge as to his burial in Machpelah—that his dust at least should be there to welcome his children and children's children, when they came thither in due course, as God had promised. Then the weary pilgrim gathered up those tired feet, which had paced out their last mile, into the bed, and gave up his spirit to God. When we are told that he was gathered to his people it must mean more than that his dust mingled with their dust in the place of burial. There are great gatherings of loving friends

awaiting us on the other side. See Heb. 11:40. At the ladder-scene in Bethel, God had told him that he would not leave him till he had done what he promised, and surely not one good thing had failed. Life may be hard and sad, but God will end it rightly. Be of good cheer and trust!

91. Jacob Mourned and Buried.

Genesis 50:4-14. The days of mourning for Jacob were only two less in number than for a king. Three hundred miles were traversed by that splendid funeral cavalcade, which included not only the family of Israel, but the magnates of Egypt. The words, *beyond Jordan* (v. 10), indicate that this book was finished on the further side of Jordan, where Moses afterward died.

The evident grief with which the precious remains were laid beside the great dead, reminds us that when God wills to do honor to any servant of his, he can secure it in remarkable ways—and ways which are entirely independent of human methods and reasonings. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." At birth he cared for your helpless body; when you die he will see to its sepulchre. The bones of the saints hold the earth for the ultimate reign of Christ!

92. Joseph Loves Until His Death.

Genesis 50:15-26. The fear of Joseph's brethren illustrates the insecurity of a position which is conceded only at the bidding of the tender caprice of love, apart from satisfaction based on satisfied justice. As Joseph had pardoned, so he might retract his pardon. No satisfaction, beyond tears, had been rendered for that far-away sin. Might he not even now require it! So fears might legitimately arise in our own hearts, had not the divine forgiveness been based on the finished work of the Cross!

How significant that sentence: "God meant it for good!" There are *meanings* in life. Things do not happen by chance, and what happens is meant for good.

All things work together for good for them that love God. Ninety-three years had passed since he was lifted from the pit; sixty since he buried his father. Finally Joseph's end came. His bones were not buried, but awaited the summons for the Exodus. That coffin seemed to be the end of all. Nay! it was the seed of the coming harvest.

(For Review Questions on Sections 65 to 92 see page 64.)

REVIEW QUESTIONS ON GENESIS

OUTLINE.

- (a) Into what two principal parts is the book of Genesis naturally divided?
- (b) Mention the three great events in the first part.
- (c) Name the four principal characters whose lives are recorded in the second part.

INTRODUCTION.

- (d) What is the meaning of the word Genesis and whence do we get it?
- (e) What word, mentioned ten times in Genesis, in each case marks the beginning of a new section of the book?
- (f) What reason have we for ascribing the authorship of the book to Moses?

SECTIONS 1-31. CHAPTERS 1-19.

(Each question applies to the paragraph of corresponding number in the Comments.)

- 1. What does the word "beginning" in the first verse of the Bible suggest?
- 2. What were the great successive steps in creation?
- 3. What does the created universe reveal regarding its Creator?
- 4. What was true of man's first home?
- 5. How did God provide for man's happiness and his development?
- 6. What are the effects of man's fall? How counter-acted?
- 7. What was the real difference between Cain and Abel?
- 8. How did evil first spread?
- 9. What name breaks the death-roll of Chapter 5 and why?
- 10. What made evil spread so widely?

11. What did God plan for Noah and why?
12. Tell the story of the flood.
13. How did Noah start life afresh?
14. What covenant did God make with him? How was its *token* appropriate?
15. What did Noah's drunkenness show regarding him? Regarding his sons?
16. What does the Tower of Babel show about human nature? What bearing has it on the varieties of human speech?
17. Who was the real leader in the movement toward Canaan, Terah or Abram?
18. What promises led Abram onward?
19. Why was the journey to Egypt a false step on Abram's part? Why did God protect him in spite of his deceit?
20. Why was it best for Abram to separate from Lot?
21. Into what trouble did selfish Lot soon fall?
22. What traits did Abram show in the capture of the marauding kings?
23. Explain the meaning of Abram's vision. Why did God so highly value his faith?
24. How did Ishmael get his name?
25. Explain the change in Abram's name. What new sign marked the renewal of God's covenant with him?
26. Explain the name that was to be given to the son of promise.
27. What was the purpose of the visit of the heavenly messengers to Abraham?
28. What did Abraham's intercession accomplish?
29. What was the purpose of the angels' visit to Sodom?
30. What effect had "evil communications" upon Lot and his family?
31. What lesson should we learn when we "remember Lot's wife"?

SECTIONS 32-64. CHAPTERS 20-34.

(Each question applies to the paragraph of corresponding number in the Comments.)

32. How can we account for Abraham's repeated act of deceit?
33. How was Abraham's faith at length rewarded?

34. Why was it necessary that Hagar and Ishmael should be sent away?
35. Explain how Beersheba got its name.
36. What made Abraham's faith in offering Isaac remarkable?
37. How did God provide a substitute?
38. When and why did Abraham make a purchase of land?
39. Explain Abraham's way of seeking a bride for his son Isaac.
40. What may we learn from the way in which Abraham's servant executed his trust?
41. How did the servant exalt his master and his master's God?
42. How did Rebekah show herself a suitable bride for Isaac?
43. Of what was Abraham "full," as well as of years?
44. How did Esau betray his character in parting with his birthright? How did Jacob show *his* in bargaining for it?
45. What sin of his father did Isaac weakly repeat?
46. What wells did Isaac dig and what may we learn from them?
47. How was the aged patriarch deceived in his own household?
48. How did the spoken lie follow the acted one?
49. Why must we condemn Esau even while we pity him?
50. Why did Rebekah have to part with her favorite son?
51. How did God meet Jacob on the threshold of his new career?
52. How did Jacob find and win the wife of his love?
53. How was the cheater cheated?
54. Mention Jacob's sons and tell how each received his name.
55. In what shrewd but unworthy way did Jacob get the better of Laban?
56. In leaving Haran how did Jacob do the right thing in the wrong way?
57. How was he protected from Laban's pursuit and charge?
58. What were the purpose and spirit of the parting covenant between Laban and Jacob?
59. How did Jacob prepare for his meeting with Esau?
60. How did God meet Jacob at Jabbok and with what result?

61. What promise did Jacob make to Esau? Why did he fail to keep it?
62. What was the result of Jacob's mistake in settling in Shechem?
63. Was the treachery of Simeon and Levi justifiable?
64. How did Jacob return to God in returning to Bethel?

SECTIONS 65-92. CHAPTERS 35-50.

(Each question applies to the paragraph of corresponding number in the Comments.)

65. What experiences of sorrow and joy marked Jacob's resettling in southern Canaan?
66. What were Jacob's mistakes in his early treatment of Joseph?
67. How did Joseph's treatment by his brothers typify men's treatment of Christ?
68. How was God's providence shown in Joseph's deliverance and sale into Egypt?
69. What enabled Joseph to resist the sharp temptation in Potiphar's house?
70. How did his imprisonment result in good?
71. What enabled him to interpret the dreams of his fellow-prisoners?
72. What finally opened the prison-doors for him?
73. What traits of character did he show when he appeared before Pharaoh?
74. How did his actions when exalted show that the Spirit of God was in him?
75. What was the purpose of Joseph's severity toward his brothers?
76. Why did he insist that Benjamin be brought to Egypt?
77. Why was their money returned in their grain-sacks?
78. How did kindness replace severity on their second visit to Egypt?
79. What was the effect of placing Joseph's cup in Benjamin's sack?
80. How did the trying situation call forth a noble plea from Judah?
81. How did Joseph show the very spirit of Christ in his treatment of his brothers?
82. How was the good news carried to the old father?
83. How was Jacob assured that God was directing his journey to Egypt?

84. What did Jacob and his household receive in Egypt?
What did he have to give to Pharaoh?
85. How did Joseph serve Pharaoh and save the nation
alive?
86. How did Jacob show his faith as his departure drew
near?
87. What did he foretell in adopting Joseph's sons?
88. What did he prophesy regarding his descendants,—
especially of Judah's line?
89. And of Joseph's?
90. What was Jacob's last wish?
91. How was it carried out?
92. What better memorial has Joseph than a great tomb
or pyramid in Egypt?

II

THE BOOK OF EXODUS

OUTLINE OF EXODUS

THE NATION DELIVERED AND ORGANIZED

INTRODUCTION	1: 1-7.
I. ISRAEL IN EGYPT.....	1: 8—12: 36.
1. <i>Oppression</i>	1: 8-22.
2. <i>The Deliverer Raised up and Called.</i>	2: 1—4: 31.
3. <i>The Plagues and the Passover.</i>	5: 1—12: 36.
II. FROM EGYPT TO SINAI.....	12: 37—18: 27.
1. <i>The Departure</i>	12: 37-42.
2. <i>The Laws of the Passover and of the First-Born</i>	12: 43—13: 22.
3. <i>The Passage of the Red Sea and the Song of Deliverance</i>	14: 1—15: 19.
4. <i>Marah, Elim and the Manna.</i>	15: 20—16: 36.
5. <i>Murmuring; Victory; Jethro's Visit.</i>	17: 1—18: 27.
III. ISRAEL AT SINAI.....	19: 1—40: 38.
1. <i>The Covenant Proposed and the People Prepared</i>	19: 1-25.
2. <i>The Ten Commandments and Other Laws</i>	20: 1—23: 33.
3. <i>Ratification of the Covenant of the Law</i>	24: 1-11.
4. <i>Moses in the Mount; Directions for the Tabernacle</i>	24: 12—31: 18.
5. <i>The Golden Calf; Penalty; Moses' Intercession</i>	32: 1—33: 23.
6. <i>Moses Again in the Mount; the Cov- enant Renewed</i>	34: 1—35.
7. <i>Construction and Erection of the Tabernacle</i>	35: 1—40: 38.

THE BOOK OF EXODUS

The word means "going out," and was given by the Greek translators, as in the case of Genesis.

The book embraces 145 years, and may be divided into three principal parts: (1) The Deliverance of Israel from Egypt: 1: 1—12: 36. (2) The Journey to Sinai: 12: 37—18: 27. (3) The Manifestation of God's Will for His People, especially in the legislation of Sinai: 19: 1—40: 38.

Its authorship by Moses is distinctly asserted by our Lord. See Matt. 12: 26; Luke 20: 37. The parallel between the pilgrimage of the hosts of Israel and the experiences of the soul is obvious and instructive, and we do well to read it with this parallel in mind; but the book is also of the greatest historical importance, and the increasing knowledge of Egyptian customs and of the conditions of life in the Sinaitic peninsula confirm the exactness and accuracy of the narrative. It could only have been written by one who, like Moses, had an intimate acquaintance with both Egypt and the Wilderness.

THE BOOK OF EXODUS

1. The Children of Israel Afflicted.

Exodus 1:1-14. The buried seed began to bear an abundant harvest, notwithstanding the efforts of Pharaoh and his people. The kings of the earth take counsel together to thwart the divine purpose. They might as well seek to arrest the incoming tide. The days of persecution and opposition have always been the growing days of the Church.

The new king probably belonged to a great dynasty, intent on preventing the recurrence of shepherd domination. The *first* move of the new policy was to embitter Israel's existence by cruel bondage. The pictured walls of the Pyramids bear witness to sufferings inflicted on slaves of a Hebrew cast of face by taskmasters armed with whips. Pharaoh and his counselors had to learn that they were not only dealing with a subject nation, but with the Eternal God.

2. God Protects Hebrew Babes from Pharaoh's Decree.

Exodus 1:15-22. Egypt's *second* stroke of policy was to begin with the children. Pharaoh and Herod set us an example in turning their attention to young life. There is nothing which so closely and instantly touches national well-being as the treatment of the children.

It is wonderful to notice what unexpected instruments God uses to defeat the purposes of his enemies. Of all people these two women seemed the unlikeliest. It may be that these two women were Egyptians, who had recently learned to fear God; but if so, their conduct was even more remarkable. God, who makes of soft sand a strong barrier against the billows, can restrain man's

wrath by the humblest instruments. You may be obscure and weak, but if you fear God he will make use of you, write your name in the book of life and multiply your spiritual children.

3. Moses Preserved by Pharaoh's Daughter.

Exodus 2:1-10. When matters had reached their worst in respect to Israel's condition, God was preparing a deliverer. The child was more than ordinarily beautiful, Acts 7:20. His parents hid him by faith, Heb. 11:23. Perhaps they had received a special revelation of his great future, on the strength of which they became strong to resist the royal command. They launched the ark, not on the Nile only, but on God's Providence. He would be captain, steersman, and convoy of the tiny bark. Miriam stood to watch. There was no fear of fatal consequences, only the quiet expectancy that God would do something worthy of himself. They reckoned on God's faithfulness, and they were amply rewarded, when the daughter of their greatest foe became the babe's patroness. See Psalm 76:10.

4. Moses Slays an Egyptian and Flees to Midian.

Exodus 2:11-25. Amid all the allurements of Pharaoh's court, the heart of Moses beat true to his own people. Neither the treasures of Egypt, nor the pleasures of sin; the attraction of human love, nor the glamour of the world's smile, could turn him aside from his own folk. A light shone for him over the humble huts of Goshen, before which that of Pharaoh's palaces paled. Some glimmering knowledge of the promised Christ appears to have been present to his mind; and he esteemed that hope to be greater riches than the treasures of Egypt. Heb. 11:26.

He had, however, much to learn. By strength no man can prevail. The battle is not to the strong, nor the race to the swift. The salvation of Israel from their untold miseries must be due, from first to last, to the outstretched hand of their Almighty Protector. Hence the



Moses is Found.

Exodus 2:1-6.

From Painting by JULIAAN J. DE VRIENDT. Modern Dutch Artist.



failure of Moses' first attempt. Instead of looking "this way and that," he must look *upward*.

5. God's Message from the Bush.

Exodus 3:1-12. The learning of Egypt was not sufficient to equip Moses for his life-work. He is taken to the solitudes of the wilderness. *That* is God's college. All who have done the greatest work in the world have graduated there—Elijah at Horeb, Ezekiel at Chebar, Paul in Arabia, John in Patmos. God's workers may take their arts course in the universities, but must take their Divinity course alone with *him*. Often in the midst of daily duty we come on the outshining of his Presence. Let us be on the outlook for it, and take off our shoes.

This burning bush has generally been taken as the emblem of the Church amid the fires of tribulation; but there is a deeper meaning. The fire was the token of God's presence. The bush was unconsumed, because God's love is its own fuel. Notice the successive steps: "I have seen"; "heard"; "know"; "am come down"; "will send." The "cry" of the previous chapter is answered by the "coming down" of this. See Luke 18:7.

6. Moses Sent to Deliver Israel.

Exodus 3:13-22. How unlike this Moses was to the man who, forty years before, had acted with such impulsive haste, Acts 7:23. He had learned much since then, and most about himself. But there should be no shrinking when God says I AM. Fill in this blank check with whatever you need for life or godliness, and God will do that and more also, with exceeding abundance.

Had we been called upon to demonstrate the life beyond death from the Old Testament, we should hardly have turned to this chapter. But our Lord read the profound significance of these august words, Matthew 22:31, 32. Evidently the patriarchs must have been all living when God spoke, or he would never have described himself as being still their God. Had they ceased to exist he must have said, not *I am*, but *I was* the God of the fathers.

7. God's Signs to Confirm Moses' Words.

Exodus 4:1-9. This wonderful chapter tells us how Moses' three misgivings were tenderly and sufficiently dealt with by his heavenly Friend. To *his first misgiving* God made answer by giving him three signs. Here first we meet with that *rod* which was so often stretched out, over the land of Egypt, over the sea, and during the sojourn in the Wilderness. Moses was but a rod, but what cannot a rod do, if handled by an Almighty hand!

Leprosy was the type of sin, and the cleansed hand suggests God's marvelous power in cleansing, and so qualifying for service, all who yield themselves to him. The third sign of the *water turned to blood* was not less significant, revealing the divine power operating through this feeble human instrument to produce wonderful effects in the world of nature. We must not live on signs, but on the Holy Spirit, though the outward sign reassures and strengthens us.

8. God's Promises Overcome Moses' Reluctance.

Exodus 4:10-17. To Moses' *second misgiving* God made a promise of exceeding beauty, which all who speak for God should consider. Compare v. 12 with Jer. 1:7-9 and 1 Cor. 2:4. If we looked at our natural powers as Paul used to do, we should glory in our lack of eloquence, as affording a better platform on which God might work. See 2 Cor. 12:9, 10.

In answer to the *third misgiving* God gave him his brother as assistant. Indeed, he was already on his way: but he was a weak man, and gave to Moses a great amount of anxiety and pain in their afterlife. After all, it is best for a man to lean only on God for counsel and ready help. If we step forth with this supreme alliance, we shall escape the hampering association with Aarons. We may as well get all we need at first-hand.

9. Moses and Aaron Announce God's Purpose to Israel.

Exodus 4:18-31. So often the keenest tests of a man's fitness for his life-work are furnished by his behavior

in his home. It may be that Zipporah had resisted the earlier imposition on her son of the initial rite of the Jewish faith and her proud soul had to yield. No man who has put his hand to God's plough can take counsel with flesh and blood, or look back. At whatever cost we must set our own house in order, before we can emancipate a nation.

When God designs it, he will contrive for us to meet the man, or men, who are to help us in our life mission. Our paths meet in the Mount of God. When the Alps were bored for the railway track, the work started on either side, and the workers met in the middle. Help is coming to you from unexpected quarters, and will meet you when you need it most.

10. The Request to Worship Jehovah Answered by Oppression.

Exodus 5:1-14. The bondage of Israel in Egypt is an apt type of our bondage to sin. See John 8:34-36; Rom. 7:23-25. The weary tyranny of our besetting sins; the imperious demands of Satan; the absence of all reward to our hopeless toils—these are striking points of analogy. Though we weep and struggle, there is no help for us but in God. No straw! No lessening of the tale of bricks! The charge of idleness! Cruel beatings! Deliverance apparently more distant than ever! But the darkest hour precedes dawn.

The hue and cry is always raised when a prisoner is escaping. The tyrant, who has so long held his prey, is not minded to surrender it without a struggle. The devil convulsed the child, as he was about to depart. Moreover, Israel must be taught to look beyond Moses or Aaron to the Eternal Jehovah.

11. Moses Appeals from Pharaoh to God.

Exodus 5:15-6:1. God's way is to bring men to an end of themselves before he arises to their help. Our efforts to deliver ourselves only end in increasing our perplexities. The tale of bricks is doubled; the burdens

augment; the strength of our purpose is broken; we are brought to the edge of despair. Probably this was the darkest hour in the life of the great leader. But from all the obloquy that was heaped on him, he took refuge in God. There is no other refuge for a limited man than "to return unto the Lord," v. 22. Return unto the Lord with your story of failure! Return unto him for fresh instructions! Return unto him with your appeal for his interposition! Be perfectly natural with your Heavenly Father! Humble yourself under his mighty hand! Even dare to reason with him, saying: "*Why!*" Then the Lord will say to you, as to Moses: "Now thou shalt see what I will do."

12. God's Name Confirms His Promises.

Exodus 6:2-9. The statement of verse 3 is at first sight, startling, because we remember several passages in Genesis where that sacred name appears. But this arises from the fact that much of Genesis was composed long after the people had left these sad experiences behind them; and it was natural to apply to God the name which was familiar to them all at the time of writing. To the patriarchs God was EL, the Strong; to their descendants he was the unchanging JEHOVAH, who fulfilled promises made centuries before. See Mal. 3:6. Notice the seven *I wills*, and the three *I AMs*. How often with us, as with Israel in verse 9, our faith and hope are hindered by physical or temporal circumstances. But our God knows our frame and is touched with the feeling of our infirmities. Therefore he can make allowances.

13. The Line of Descent of God's Spokesmen.

Exodus 6:10-27. Here is an inventory of God's jewels, in the day when he counted them up. We are reminded of Mal. 3:17. Before he led forth the flock, the Good Shepherd counted them, that not one might be missing. There is a peculiar emphasis on the mention of Moses and Aaron in verse 26: "These are *that* Moses

and Aaron." It was as though we were led to the hole of the pit whence they were digged, and a very poor hole it was, for their parentage and estate were quite humble and ordinary. But by means of them the Almighty wrought the deliverance of his people. It was through such feeble instruments as these that he spake to the greatest monarch of the time, the mighty Pharaoh, whose remains are with us to this day. It is his method to choose the weak and foolish things to bring to naught and confound the strong and wise, that no flesh should glory in his presence.

14. Pharaoh Stubborn Against Israel's Release.

Exodus 6:28—7:13. How often we say in a similar tone, "I am of uncircumcised lips, and how shall Pharaoh hearken unto me?" Forty years in the wilderness, in absolute solitude, had robbed Moses of the eloquence with which Stephen credits him in earlier life. Like Jeremiah, he felt himself a child and unable to speak.

It is an awful moment when the human will sets itself in antagonism to the divine. If it will not bend, it must break. For once the scion of an imperial race had met his superior. It were better for the potsherd to strive with the potsherds of the earth! But God is not unreasonable. At the outset he endeavored to prove to Pharaoh who and what he was. One of the chief reasons for the plagues, as well as of these miracles, was to establish the fact that the Jehovah of the Hebrews was the great Being who lives behind the whole apparatus of nature.

15. Sign of the Waters Turned to Blood.

Exodus 7:14—25. Satan will mimic God's work up to a point. We are told that Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses; but even then Moses' rod swallowed their rods. They were defeated in their own realm, that Pharaoh's faith in them might be shaken. But it was in their predictions of what was coming that the Hebrew brethren specially attested their superiority. The sky

was roseate with the blush of dawn, as Pharaoh, accompanied by his court, came to perform his customary ablutions or to worship at the brink of the Nile. Moses met him with the peremptory summons, "Let my people go," . . . and in accordance with his prediction the Nile became as blood. But since by their clever legerdemain the magicians appeared able to do as much, his heart was hardened—*i. e.*, "he did not set his heart to it." In other words, he would not consider the message sent to him by the hand of God's accredited messengers.

16. The Plague of Frogs and its Removal.

Exodus 8:1-15. Probably the plagues followed in rapid succession, so that the impression of one had not passed away before another succeeded. The whole conflict was probably comprehended in nine or ten months. The frog was a goddess, hence the plague was aggravated, as it was unlawful to destroy one. This stroke elicited the first symptom of surrender. Though the magicians counterfeited the coming of the frogs they failed to remove them, and the king did not hope for such help from them. Pharaoh implored the intercession of the great Hebrew brethren, who, to make the power of God and the efficacy of prayer more manifest, asked the king to fix the time. They who know God and obey him absolutely can reckon on him with perfect certainty and confidence. Our God delights in the faith that dares to pledge his willingness and power, and he will not fail the soul that ventures wholly on his all-sufficiency.

17. The Plagues of Lice and of Flies.

Exodus 8:16-32. Verse 22 gives us the clue to these successive visitations—"To the end that thou mayest know." The Egyptians worshiped the river from which the frogs came; were extremely punctilious in their purity by perpetual bathing; and sacrificed to the deities who presided over the noisome insect tribes. It was necessary to prove, therefore, that these gods were no

gods, "but that the Lord made the heavens." The just and righteous Jehovah could not expect Pharaoh to obey his voice, until he had shown himself to be God of gods and Lord of lords, and that he was Lord "in the midst of the earth." He is not an absentee; but nearer than breathing.

Notice the severance in verse 22! We do not belong to this world, because we have been crucified to it in Christ, and in him have risen to the heavenly places.

18. The Murrain of Cattle and the Plague of Boils.

Exodus 9:1-12. The plague on the cattle reminds us that the whole creation groans and travails from the effects of human sin. See Romans 8:20. But those groans are the cries of birth, not of death; and herald a happier day when the creation shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the sons of God. There is a hint of this here, for the children of Israel lost not so much as one of their cattle from this pestilence. The Lord knoweth how to deliver his own, and our religion should make a difference for the living things of our firesides and farms.

How terribly does sin affect our physical health! These boils and blains on man and beast remind us of the inevitable brand with which sin marks its slaves. Let us read again Psalm 91, in the light of this passage. The souls that shelter under God's wing, from the charmed circle of his presence, look, unharmed and unfearful, on pestilence and plague.

19. Mighty Thunderings and Hail.

Exodus 9:13-35. This paragraph recalls Rev. 7:3. The great angel there commanded that no wind should blow on the earth, or on the sea, or upon any tree, until the servants of God had been sealed on their foreheads. Only when this had been effected did the trumpets give signal of the disasters that broke successively on the earth. See Rev. 8:7, etc. The only spot in which the soul is safe is within the encircling provisions of the

covenant. Israel stood there and was safe, not only from the hail but from the destroying sword. It was as safe a spot as the center of a cyclone is said to be. God had bound himself by the most solemn sanctions to be a God to his people and deliver them. It was in pursuance of this pledge that he was their pavilion and canopy in this awful hour, catching the hailstones on his pinions, and securing them from hurt. Directly we trust in Christ he becomes our hiding-place from the storms of judgment and condemnation, Heb. 13:20.

20. Pharaoh Still Refuses to Submit.

Exodus 10:1-11. Pharaoh was capable of being a noble and glorious soul, through which God might have shown forth all his power and glory, 9:16. But he refused, and the profanation of the best made him the worst. There is a crisis in every soul-history up to which God's methods appear likely to turn the proud to himself; but if that is passed, those methods seem only to harden. Just as in winter the thaw of the noon makes harder ice during the night; so, if the love of God fails to soften, it hardens. In this sense God seemed to harden Pharaoh's heart. The real conflict lay with his stubborn will, which would not yield, v. 3; although his servants advised him to let the people go, v. 7. The only result was that the king recalled the Hebrew leaders and made another effort at compromise—"Go now ye that are men." The children are always the key to the situation.

21. The Plagues of Locusts and of Darkness.

Exodus 10:12-29. The locust is the most terrible plague of Eastern lands. The heat intense; the air languid; the sound as of a strong breeze; the sun darkened by a cloud of living things, which cover the earth several inches thick and devour every green thing, v. 15. Notice the extorted confession, at last, of sin, v. 16. Many hearts and lives are devastated by these locust-cares, which eat up all the blades of promise and darken heaven. At the first trace of genuine repentance, however, they are borne away.

The Hebrew word for *darkness* is the same that is used in Gen. 1:2. The sun was one of the chief deities of Egypt, hence the horror that paralyzed her population, v. 23. But there was light in Goshen. See Psalm 112:4 and John 8:12. Pharaoh proposed one last compromise. See v. 24. Moses made a grand answer. The whole universe shall share in our redemption, Rom. 8:20, 21. Jesus will be content with nothing less than all the purchased possession.

22. The Death of the First-born Threatened.

Exodus 11:1-10. "One plague more." These are ominous words! This final act of judgment would smite the fetters from Israel's neck forever. It is vain for man to enter into conflict with God. God does not crush him at once, because he is long-suffering and forgiving. See 2 Peter 3:9. But if man persists, the inevitable blow falls. See Psalm 7:12. The word *borrow* is better rendered *ask*, v. 2, R. V. The Hebrew phrase has no suggestion of a return being expected. This was befitting payment for their long and unrewarded labor.

The great cry, v. 6, recalls the piercing wail that rings through an eastern home when death takes place. The world shall hear one other such cry, as we learn from Rev. 1:7. There is no difference between God's people and others when sin is concerned. All have come short of God's glory. Nor is there difference in his redeeming grace. But there is *all* the difference between those who shelter under the blood of the Lamb and those who refuse.

23. The Passover Lamb and its Sprinkled Blood.

Exodus 12:1-14. Henceforth, for Israel, there was to be a new beginning of the year. We should date our birthdays not from the cradle, but from the Cross. The Paschal Lamb was an evident foreshadowing of Christ. See 1 Cor. 5:7. (1). He was without blemish. Searched by friend and foe, no fault was found in him. (2). He was in his prime, when he laid down his life. (3). Set

apart at the opening of his ministry, it took three years to consummate his purpose. (4). His blood—that phrase being equivalent to his sacrificial death—speaks of the satisfaction of the just claims of inviolable law, where his flesh is “meat indeed.” (5). Roasting with fire, unleavened bread and bitter herbs denote the intensity of his sufferings, and the chastened spirit with which we draw nigh. And does not the pilgrim’s attitude bespeak the attitude of the Church, which, at any moment, may be summoned to go forth at the trumpet sounding? 1 Cor. 15: 52.

24. The Feast of Unleavened Bread.

Exodus 12:15–28. The inmate of the house did not see the sprinkled blood. It was not necessary to be always going forth to look at it. It was clearly not a matter for his emotion or his intelligence. It was an accomplished fact, and it was enough for God to see it: “When I see the blood I will pass over.” Abide thou in Christ. It is not necessary to try to understand, or feel; just be quiet and trust the finished work and the sworn promise of God. He hath said: “Whosoever believeth shall not perish.” The Lamb slain is in the midst of the throne; it is enough.

Let us keep the feast, not with the leavened bread of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. Remember that you must put away all ferment, and all that partakes of disease, decay, or death that God may be able to tarry in the house of your life, and be your fellow-pilgrim in the march of life.

25. The First-born of Egypt Slain.

Exodus 12:29–36. It was night, the time for peace, rest and silence. None anticipated evil, unless some few among the Egyptians had begun to believe in the veracity of Moses, that man of God. Suddenly, without warning, there was death everywhere. Death can enter the palace, elude the sentinels, pass locked doors, and smite the son of Pharaoh; whilst the lowly obscurity of the



Death of Pharaoh's First-Born.

From Painting by Eusebius Stomason. Master British Artist.

Exodus 12 : 29-30.

woman grinding corn and the captive in the dungeon, will not save them from his blow. There is no difference between us all in the fact of our sinnership, or the inevitableness of penalty, unless redeemed, as Israel was, by sacrifice.

Pharaoh's surrender was complete. Children? *Yes!* Flocks and herds? *Yes!* There was also a great popular uprising, and the people readily supplied the Israelites with whatever they asked—their wages for long unpaid servitude. They went forth as a triumphant host, "more than conquerors" through him who loved them.

26. Israel Led Out of Egypt.

Exodus 12:37-51. The 600,000 were males above 20 years of age, Numbers 1:3-43. This would make the entire body not less than 2,000,000 of people of all ages. Succoth was the first rallying point on which the various bands converged. It stood in open country, over which their flocks and herds spread themselves. It was, indeed, a night to be observed, when the Exodus took place, because, as Bunsen says, it was the beginning of history; and we may almost say further that it was the hour when Israel was born as a nation. God called his son out of Egypt. At that moment also the period of which Abraham had been apprised ran out. See Gen. 15:13; Gal. 3:17; and v. 40 here.

Notice the stress laid on circumcision, which was the type of putting away the sins of the flesh. See Col. 2:11. We must be separated from sin, before we can claim our portion in the Paschal Lamb, or join the Exodus.

27. The First-born Set Apart unto Jehovah.

Exodus 13:1-16. Two Hebrew customs dated from the Exodus—first, the dedication of the first-born to God's service, and second, the Feast of Unleavened Bread, when the Passover must be killed. See Luke 22:7. The first-born had been specially redeemed and so were specially God's. On them all was branded the

one brief word *Mine*. What a lesson for us all who have been redeemed by the precious blood of Christ. We are his by right of purchase; we ought to be his by our own choice and indwelt by his Spirit. Whenever we take up this position with regard to God, we may count on his strong hand. In after years the first-born sons, who performed the priestly rites, were replaced by Levites, Num. 3:11-13; but still they were ransomed by a slain lamb. Every first-born son lived because a lamb died. In this he stood on the same level as the firstling of an ass. What a parable is here! See Rom. 3:22 and 10:12.

28. The People are Led Out and Pursued.

Exodus 13:17-14:9. There were two routes to Canaan, the nearest through the land of the Philistines; but to take that would have exposed the Hebrews to the very sights that so dismayed the twelve spies. See Num. 33. They might have had to fight every mile of advance. This would have been too great an ordeal for their young faith. So God, like the mother eagle, bore them on his wings. The Angel who conducted the march in the cloud chariot, *led them about*. Thus God deals with us still, tempering the wind to the shorn lamb. Patience and faith are still severely tested by the circuitous and laborious route, but when in the afterwards we understand God's reasons, we are satisfied. There are many lessons learnt on the wilderness route. How often God leads us into what seem to be impossible positions, that in our absolute extremity there may be room for him to work. All is love. See Psalm 136.

29. The Murmuring People Encouraged.

Exodus 14:10-20. We cannot wonder at their consternation. Before, the surf of the beach; behind, the serried ranks of Egypt's chivalry; on either side, impassable cliffs. It seemed a veritable death-trap. But Moses reckoned confidently on the salvation of God. All they had to do, in the first instance, was to stand still and see it. It is hard to stand still when the situation be-

comes acute. If you don't know what to do, stand still until you do; it is God's business to direct and defend the believing soul. Let God do the fighting, v. 14. This Angel, Stephen tells us, was our Lord. Acts 7:38. He always puts himself between us and our strong enemies. Note v. 19. The ordinary man puts circumstances between himself and God, but the consecrated soul inserts God between himself and circumstances. When God says *Forward!* he will open the path and lead his people, as a shepherd leads his flock, by a way they know not.

30. The Egyptians Destroyed in the Sea.

Exodus 14:21-31. As the front ranks of Israel approached the surf, the billows parted. The very waves they dreaded became a wall. By faith Israel passed through the Red Sea as on dry land. They went through the flood on foot. So shalt thou, oh frightened child of God! Behind thee, the terror of the foe; before thee, the horror of the unknown. But God is with thee. The sheen of the Presence-Cloud shines upon and before thee. Be of good cheer, though thou passest through the waters, thou shalt not be overwhelmed. See Ps. 66:6; 78:13; Isa. 43:2.

The Egyptians owed their safety at first to the presence of Israel; but it was only for a time. The ungodly owe more to the presence of God's children than they realize. See Gen. 19:22. On which side of God's cloud are you? In Christ we may stand without fear before the searchlight of God! Compare v. 24 with Heb. 4:13 and Rev. 6:16.

31. Moses' Song of Praise to Jehovah.

Exodus 15:1-18. This sublime ode falls into three divisions. *We learn, first, what God is.* *Strength* in the day of battle; *song* in victory; *salvation* always. He is the God of our fathers, and our own; the mighty champion of his people. Notice that the Spirit of Inspiration gives but a line or two to Israel's murmurings, but

records this happy song with elaborate care. Praise is comely!

We discover, second, what God is to his foes. They are covered by the engulfing waves of destruction. As well might thorns fight fire as a man succeed against God.

We are taught, third, what God does for his friends. He leads forth the people whom he has redeemed. He guides them in his strength to their home. He who brought them out brings them in, and plants them in the place he has prepared. Claim that he should do this for you. He who brought you out from Egypt can bring you into Canaan.

32. Marah's Waters Sweetened; Elim's Rest.

Exodus 15:19-27. How rapid are the transitions of life! To-day the song of victory, to-morrow the bitter wells of Marah, and the next the shadow of Elim's palms! One moment we are singing the joyous song of victory on the shores of the Red Sea, strewn with the bodies of foes, which we believe that we have seen for the last time; and then, by a sudden change, we find ourselves standing beside Marah-waters of pain and disappointment. We, however, learn more of God at Marah than at Elim; because he reveals to us the tree of the Cross. It was there that our Lord gave up his will absolutely to the Father. See Heb. 10:5, 6, 7. "He bare our sins in his own body on the *tree*." Now, for us, there is but one way to bear sorrow and to extract its sweetness. We must yield our will to God; we must accept what he permits; we must do what he bids. So we come to find that *dis*-appointments are *his* appointments.

33. Murmuring for Food Rebuked.

Exodus 16:1-12. Moses made a double promise to the Israelites in God's name. In the evening they were to have flesh to eat, and in the morning bread to the full. But before these gifts could be received, notice must be taken of their conduct toward the two brothers, whose

authority had been impugned by the events of the morning. Hence the appearance of the divine glory in the cloud, v. 10. After this a vast flight of quails, a migratory bird which often crosses the Red Sea at this very spot, fell to the ground in the near neighborhood of the Hebrew camp, and lay there in an exhausted condition, which allowed of their being captured by the hand. How striking are those words: "The Lord heareth your murmurings!" We should remember them, when next we are tempted to doubt God's love and to complain of his dealings with us. Let God's faithful servants take courage; he will vindicate them.

34. The Manna in the Wilderness.

Exodus 16:13-26. The manna was typical of Christ. See John 6: 31-34. He came down from heaven to bring God's life within the reach of man. It is not enough that God has made so rich and plentiful a provision for us, we must appropriate it by our daily prayer and faith. Our Lord calls himself "the bread of life," not only to teach us what he is in himself in relation to our soul-need, but to remind us that he must be inwardly appropriated, fed upon, and made part of our very selves. Only so can he impart strength and joy to our hearts. It was not enough that the manna, sparkling like pearls in the morning sunshine, lay within their reach, the Israelites must gather it. The dew speaks not only of the Holy Spirit, but of the dawn. There is no time like the early morning for fellowship with Jesus! You cannot have too much. Gather all you may, you will have none to spare; but if you are pressed with needful duty, a little of Christ will go a long way, you shall have no lack.

35. Daily Food and its Memorial.

Exodus 16: 27-36. Wherever the cloud broods the manna falls. If we are true to God's leadings, and pitch our tents in obedience to his guiding cloud, we may confidently reckon on him to provide our daily food. It

will come "day by day." Each man must gather, not only for himself, but for his own household. We are not to hoard up against to-morrow, because God, who *has* provided, *will* provide. And we are not to break in on the rest-day, or on the rest of our soul, by perpetual fret and care about our physical needs. God who opens his hand to supply the hunger of every living thing will not neglect his children. Give yourself up to holy fellowship; roll your anxieties on him; take what he provides now, and trust him for all coming days. Your bread shall be given you, and more than that. Remember that he gave quails in the desert and fish to the five thousand!

36. Water from the Rock; Victory over Amalek.

Exodus 17:1-16. From the smitten rock flowed the water for the thirsty hosts. So the Rock of Ages was smitten, and from his riven side has flowed out blood and water, for the sin and thirst of the world. He that eateth his flesh and drinketh his blood, spiritually, hath eternal life. Such refreshment is in preparation for warfare. *Then* came Amalek! When our physical needs are satisfied, there is always the fear of Amalek, who, in the typology of Scripture, stands for the flesh. Between this wilderness tribe and Israel the conflict was long and bitter. The old Adam, said Luther, is too strong for the young Melancthon. But let the Lord fight for you! Lift up your hands with opened palms to him; he will not fail. See R. V. margin and Matt. 1:21. But guard the rear, and ask that Jesus shall beset you behind as well as before. See Deut. 25:17, 18.

(For Review Questions on Sections 1-36 see page 109.)

37. Moses Tells Jethro of God's Goodness.

Exodus 18:1-12. The names that Moses gave his two sons betray the drift of his thoughts during the forty years of his shepherd life. May we ever remember that we are strangers here, and our only help is in God. How humble Moses was in attributing to God all the glory of



Victory, O Lord! Exodus 17 : 8-12.

From Painting by SIR JOHN E. MILLAIS. Modern British Artist.

the Exodus! This is the sure cure of pride; and what are we but the axe that lies at the tree-foot, or the dry jaw-bone of an ass! Jethro belonged to another type of the religious life. He was not one of the chosen people, nor did he follow the methods of Jewish worship. But holy souls recognize their kinship the world over, and in loving embrace disregard the minor disagreements. "Grace be with *all* those who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity."

38. Moses Appoints Rulers to Judge Israel.

Exodus 18:13-27. Jethro's frank acknowledgment of God's supremacy and lovingkindness was extremely beautiful. Oh, for more wisdom to discern, and humble reverence to acknowledge the divine goodness wherever we encounter it. His advice also was most sagacious. It is far better to set a thousand people to work than attempt to do the work of a thousand. The greatest and most useful men are those who know how to devolve on others work for which these are quite competent, whilst they concentrate themselves on matters of the highest moment, which the others cannot undertake. Thus character is created. It is the highest service of all to bring men's requests and causes to God, and then to show them the way in which they should walk and the work they should do. In the best sense this is what Jesus does for us all.

39. Moses Receives Jehovah's Words in the Mount.

Exodus 19:1-15. The plain beneath Sinai, where Israel encamped, has been identified, and the reader should study the books of travelers which afford a mental conception of the scene. The brilliant colors, in which red sandstone predominates; the shattered, thunder-stricken peaks; the awful silence; the utter absence of vegetation; the level plain giving abundant opportunity for all to hear and see—all these deserve notice. The tenderness of the divine address is very touching. Nor

are *we* excluded from these promises, if we are among Abraham's spiritual children. See Rom. 4:16. If God could carry this multitude of people, he is sufficient for us and our burdens. We also may be his peculiar treasure and a kingdom of priests.

But Israel's solemn pledge was a profound mistake. Had they known themselves better, they would never have made it, and one design of the Decalogue was to show how absolutely impossible it is for any to be justified by the works of the Law. Pentecost, which Whitsuntide commemorates, took place on the anniversary of this august scene.

40. The People Warned not to Approach the Mount.

Exodus 19:16-25. The holiness of God was taught in object lessons. The people must wash their garments, the mount must be fenced in, not a beast might graze upon the slopes, not a hand might touch the holy soil. Moses must twice descend to warn the people, vs. 14, 21, 25. Only he and Aaron might ascend. All was done to convince the people of the vast distance that intervened between themselves and God. It was the awe engendered by such provisions, and which pervaded the ancient dispensation, that led Peter to cry, when the divine glory of Jesus smote upon him: "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord."

Dare to believe that beneath every cloud of soul-anguish, bereavement, and trial, you will find the burning love of God. Clouds and darkness may be round about him, but faithfulness and truth, judgment and mercy are at the foundation of his throne. Listen to the voice that bids you enter the pavilion, and remember Heb. 12:18, etc.

41. The "Ten Words" Spoken at Sinai.

Exodus 20:1-17. The Law was given by the disposition of angels, through the medium of Moses. See John 1:17; Acts 7:53. It tells us, not what God is, for that

is only shown in Jesus Christ, but what man should be. It combines in a concise form that moral code which is part of the nature of things, and is written on man's conscience. See Rom. 2:5. Even the Fourth Commandment is deeply graven on our physical nature. These laws are mostly negative, but their positive side is stated in Matt. 5. For practical purposes this divine code consists of two divisions or tables; the first, of our duties toward God; the second, of those to man; but these are summed up in the one great law of love. See Mark 12:29-31; Rom. 13:8-10 and Gal. 5:14. Our Lord Jesus stands surety for us at the bar of Sinai. By his righteousness imputed and imparted, by his obedience and death, by the gracious indwelling of his Spirit, he comes "not to destroy, but to fulfill." See Matt. 5:17; Rom. 8:4.

42. The People Fear; Idols and Altars.

Exodus 20:18-26. When our Lord was on earth he was so attractive and winsome that the publicans and sinners drew near to hear him, penitents wept at his feet, children nestled to his heart. But even then there were some who desired him to depart out of their coasts. So here, while Moses drew near, the people stood afar off. Let us not be among those who avoid the near presence of God, but of those who are made nigh by the blood of Christ. Let us exercise our right to draw near to the throne of grace, and stand in the very presence of our Father-God, because we have a great High Priest, who is passed through the heavens.

At the 22d verse we begin the Book of the Covenant, which extends to 23:33, containing a series of wholesome laws, and the first enactment deals with the worship of the Most High. Note that in *all* places he will record his Name. Everywhere we may worship him. The altar had to be of earth, teaching us the lessons of humility, simplicity and self-abasement. See Heb. 13:10. But always the adjustment with God precedes rightness toward man.

43. Laws of Conduct and Worship.

Exodus 23:1-17. We may apply these various precepts to our own hearts. Many of them breathe the very spirit of Christ. We must watch our speech, so that no man's character may suffer by our gossip or slander. We must dare to stand for the truth, though we stand absolutely alone. With all kindness and good will we must save our neighbor from damage, even though he has vented on us his spleen. It is never for us to take advantage of him; God will deal with him on our behalf, and in his own time and way. Let us not fret ourselves to do evil. David's example in refusing to injure Saul when his bitter enemy was within his reach is an inspiring example for us to follow. We must hold an even balance for just and honorable dealing with all men; and cultivate the Sabbath-keeping of the heart. In every life, also, there should be perpetual memory of Calvary, the Resurrection and Pentecost—the three feasts of the soul!

44. Promise of Entrance into Canaan.

Exodus 23:18-33. This Angel must have been the Lord himself, for Stephen said expressly that the Angel was with Moses at the burning bush, where Jehovah revealed himself, and the very ground was holy. Besides, we are told here that God's Name—*i. e.*, his nature—was in him. The Son of God, therefore, must have been the leader of that pilgrim-host, preceding the march, and preparing for their needs.

Notice that God would also send the hornet before his people, v. 28. The Presence, which is an Angel for God's children, becomes a hornet to the rebellious and ungodly. To one it is a savor of life, and to the other of death. The sun that bleaches linen white, tans the hands that expose it; the cloud which is light to Israel is thick darkness to Egypt. Grieve not the Holy One, who will overcome your enemies and satisfy your soul with goodness, if you will obey his voice.

45. The Covenant Made and Sealed by Blood.

Exodus 24:1-11. Moses remained in communion with God whilst receiving the laws of the preceding chapters. When they were concluded he descended to ratify with all solemnity the Covenant between Jehovah and Israel. If the altar represented God's side of the transaction, the twelve pillars stood for Israel. The young men filled the priestly office according to 13:2, and until the Levites were appointed. It must have been a solemn spectacle as the sprinkled blood sealed the covenant. But let us turn from that first covenant, sealed with the blood of beasts, to the New Covenant, by which all the Church of the Redeemed are bound to God, and which was sealed by the shedding of the precious blood of Christ. "This is my blood of the Covenant," said Jesus, when handing round the wine. See Heb. 9:18-20, and 13:20. The Lord's Supper is a perpetual reminder of our obligations.

46. Moses Shown God's Plan for the Tabernacle.

Exodus 24:12-25:9. There were four concentric circles, so to speak, represented as gathered around the burning center of the Divine Presence. In the outer circle, the people, vs. 2, 17; next, the seventy elders, vs. 9, 14; then, Joshua, v. 13; 32:17, and lastly, Moses, v. 18. These represent respectively, the unenlightened; those whose religious life is hindered by their excessive devotion to the flesh; the few whose fellowship is liable to be interrupted by the war-clarion; and those who have been made nigh unto God in Jesus Christ our Lord, and have been baptized into the Holy Spirit. To which group have we attained? We are invited to draw nigh, let us act on the invitation. See Heb. 10:19, 20. There is always room at the top, and there we may stand, beholding, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord. Notice that God said, Come up unto *me*. He longs to have our love and faith; his delights are with the sons of men; at great cost he has opened the door of access, Rom. 5:1, 2. We need God, but God wants us, and

therefore the construction of the Tabernacle is next arranged, that he may dwell with man upon the earth.

47. The Ark and the Mercy-Seat.

Exodus 25:10-22. The Tabernacle was full of symbolical teaching of which the full meaning is unfolded in the Epistle to the Hebrews, where we are distinctly told that the Holy Spirit inspired the plan of the various parts. See Heb. 9:8. Well would it be for us, if we built our lives as Moses the Tabernacle, only on the divine plan. Note 25:9, 40; 26:30; 27:8; Heb. 8:5. The *Ark* was the symbol of the Covenant between Jehovah and his people.

The golden slab, known as the mercy-seat, supplied the meeting-place between God and man. It was there that the high priest sprinkled the blood of atonement once a year. It is alluded to by the apostles, Paul and John, as the "propitiation." We might insert *Mercy-seat* in each passage. See Rom. 3:25; 1 John 2:2. Angel forms bent on either side, with their faces downward. See 1 Peter 1:12. The tables of the Law lay written beneath, because the divine righteousness underlies all God's dealings with men.

48. The Table of Showbread and the Lampstand.

Exodus 25:23-40. The Table of the Showbread, or Presence-bread, held the twelve loaves, which represented the tribes of Israel. It was three feet long, one foot, six inches broad, and two feet, three inches high. The border or edging of gold around the top kept its contents from falling off. The loaves were changed each week, and when removed, were eaten only by the priests. See Mark 2:26. Surely the suggestion of this table, standing, as it did, immediately before the veil on the outer side, was intended to teach that the purity and devotion of Israel were as bread to God. He taketh pleasure in them that fear him. We also feed with God on the beauty and glory of our Saviour's obedience unto death.

The candlestick, with its seven branches, cost \$35,000, and is a type of Christ, the Light of the World, and of the people of God when illuminated by the Divine Fire and shining amid the darkness around. See Zech. 4:2; John 8:12; Rev. 1:13.

49. The Curtains and Boards of the Tabernacle.

Exodus 26:1-25. The Tabernacle was constructed of upright boards, over which four sets of curtains were thrown. The innermost set, which made the ceiling, was of tapestry, embroidered with cherubim in various colors—blue, scarlet and purple—the cunning work of a damask weaver. Over these was a second set, of goats' hair, longer and broader, so as to protect them; whilst the third and fourth sets were of rams' and seals' skins, respectively, to protect the whole from the weather. In these curtains we may find profound teaching concerning the human nature of our Lord; for we are told that the Word of God became flesh and *tabernacled* among us; and that phrase naturally suggests that his human body was the tent or tabernacle in which his spirit dwelt. See John 1:14. In the fine-twined linen his holiness; in the blue his heavenly origin; in the purple his majesty; in the scarlet his sufferings.

50. The Veil and the Screen.

Exodus 26:26-37. The boards that made the sides and back of the Tabernacle were of wood covered with gold, and set in sockets of silver. They were knit together by the five long bars that passed through the rings, parallel with the ground. The veil typified the separation between man and God, the awful barrier that sin has caused, which shuts out from the enjoyment of God all save those who can enter into the Holiest by the blood of Jesus. Men had impressed on them their unworthiness to approach God. The cherubic forms woven on the veil reminded them of Gen 3:24. They were led to anticipate the hour when a new and living way would be opened.

The division of the Tabernacle suggests two degrees of nearness to God, or two stages in Christian living. You may know the great brazen altar which is Calvary; and the showbread table and candlestick; but there is something beyond these for those who have learned the meaning of the rent veil and the Cross! See Matt. 27:51; Gal. 2:20.

51. The Altar and the Court.

Exodus 27:1-19. The brazen altar is dealt with long before any particular mention is made of the altar of incense, because the question of our relationship with God, through the death of our Lord on the Cross, must precede our fellowship with him, and our successful intercession. Each of these altars was made of the same kind of wood, but in the case of the altar we are now considering, and which stood in front of the Tabernacle, the wood was encased in brass, that metal suggesting the severity of the sacrificial flame that burnt at the Crucifixion, when Christ our Passover was sacrificed for us. Let us distinguish between these altars. We have passed beyond the one; we are called to minister perpetually at the other. The court was fifty yards long by twenty-five broad, and was formed by curtains of fine-twined yarn. There must be separation between God's priests and the world. See 1 Pet. 2:5.

52. The Beaten Oil; the Ephod.

Exodus 27:20-28:14. Always in Scripture oil is an emblem of the Holy Spirit. It is his grace communicated to the wick of our character and life, which makes them capable of giving a bright light for God. This oil was *pure*, because none shine brightly for God who are not pure in heart and poor in spirit. It was *beaten*, because our best work is often the result of our sorrows. McCheyne used to say, "Beaten oil for the sanctuary," referring to the care with which ministers and teachers should prepare for their work. Get your oil direct! See Zech. 4:2, 3.

It is befitting that we should consider the priestly garments. We minister within the curtained court; order the lamp of testimony till daybreak, and stand before the altar of incense—it is meet that we should be arrayed in the beauty of holiness. Our Lord bears our names, graven indelibly and eternally, and we are accepted in the Beloved.

53. The Breastplate and its Stones.

Exodus 28:15-30. The breastplate bore twelve precious stones, on each of which the name of a tribe was engraved—the smallest as well as the greatest, Benjamin as well as Judah, Simeon which faded in the desert, as well as Ephraim which occupied the center of the Promised Land. Whatever might be their sins and failures, their chastenings and penalties, nothing could remove them from that sacred place. They might even be at enmity among themselves, but still they would abide there in perfect unity. So it is with ourselves. Our names are engraven on the heart of Jesus, and ever presented before God. Neither life nor death can separate us from his love. Do not look at your shortcomings and failures, but at your standing in Christ Jesus. You cannot be forgotten by God. The dark waters may flow over your soul, the voice of the accuser may be hoarse in your ear, your heart and your flesh may fail, but you are precious in God's sight, and sparkle in his light like a jasper or sapphire.

54. Aaron's Holy Garments.

Exodus 28:31-43. The robe was worn under the ephod. It was of blue, the color of heaven, of deep lakes, of the gentian and the forget-me-not. It was of one piece. See John 19:23. It ended in a fringe, in which bells and pomegranates alternated. We are as the skirts of his garments, and the holy oil will reach us there, so the psalmist says. See Ps. 133:2. We may receive the unction of the holy Christ. The Spirit so richly given to him may anoint even us, and it will re-

veal itself in the *fruit* of the pomegranate and the *sweetness* of the golden bell. Aaron's headplate bore an inscription, which the prophet tells us should be written also on our commonest duties and most prosaic service. See Zech. 14: 20, 21. For ordinary priests the clothing was very simple. Pure white linen! Such is the garb which befits us all! Rev. 19: 8.

55. The Priests Prepared for Consecration.

Exodus 29:1-18. The consecration of the priests was an elaborate and impressive ceremony. Notice how Aaron and his sons are classed together, as though to remind us that Jesus and we stand together forevermore. He is the faithful High Priest, but we also have been made priests unto God. First came the washing with water, intimating the necessity for personal purity. See Heb. 10: 22. Then the donning of official robes; for God's priests must be arrayed in the beauty of holiness. See Ps. 110: 3.

The anointing oil is the emblem of the Holy Spirit. See Ps. 132 and 1 John 2: 27. It is not enough to have the Holy Spirit in us for character, his anointing must be on us for service. The slain bullock, as sin offering, reminds us of the contrast between our Lord and us. He knew no sin; we require the propitiation for sin. The burnt-offering reminds us of Rom. 12: 1, 2.

56. The Consecration Offerings.

Exodus 29:19-30. The second ram of the consecration ceremony yielded its blood to be placed on ear and hand and foot. We are thus taught that our senses, deeds and goings are to be dedicated to God. Though the garments, which had just been put on, were perfectly new, they were besprinkled with blood and oil from head to foot. To our eyes a grievous disfigurement; but the Holy Spirit thus signified that even beauty is subordinate to the necessity for God's forgiveness and anointing. Whenever the priest beheld his dress he was reminded of his unworthiness, and of the

abundant grace of God. Of course, the Lord Jesus needed no such preparation. He was holy, harmless and separate from sinners.

Part of the flesh was waved heavenward and burned, as though God fed on it, whilst part was eaten by the priests. It was as though God and they feasted together in one holy sacrament, the symbol of their at-one-ment.

57. The Continual Daily Offerings.

Exodus 29:31-46. The consecration ceremony was repeated on seven succeeding days, and must have produced a profound impression. Thus line was upon line; and we may magnify God's patience, in being willing through these repeated ordinances to educate the Hebrew people to the sublimest spirituality.

Notice the injunctions for daily services! No religious life can thrive without its regular hours and habits of devotion, such as these offerings suggest. Morning and evening prayers have been the custom in all ages. With the one we go forth to our labor till the evening, asking our Father to give guidance and protection. With the other we entreat forgiveness and mercy. See Psalm 55:17; Daniel 6:10. The chapter ends with many great and precious promises, which we who believe in Jesus may claim and enjoy.

58. The Altar of Incense.

Exodus 30:1-10. It seems late in the story of the Tabernacle that the incense-altar should be only mentioned now; but it is not unsuitable, because intercessory prayer, which it represents, is the crown and climax of the religious life. When our Lord had finished his sacrificial death, he passed into the heavens to make intercession for us. In Rev. 8:3, 4, R. V., the veil is lifted, and we are allowed to behold him, standing by the golden altar in heaven, and adding much incense to the prayers of *all* saints. What a wealth of prayer is ever passing through those gracious hands and that lov-

ing heart! John 17 is the Golden Altar of Scripture; let us often worship there. But, alas, these earthly altars soon get defiled, even by our prayers, and need the blood that speaketh peace. All our prayer requires the blood of at-one-ment.

59. The Atonement Money and the Laver.

Exodus 30:11-21. The atonement money was paid by all alike, to remind them that they were a redeemed race, and that so far as their value was concerned, neither rank, nor age, nor money made any difference. See Rom. 3: 22-24; 10:12, 13. The rich might not give more, lest he be made proud; the poor must not give less, so that he might be leveled up by the common mercy of God.

The laver reminds us of our need of daily washing. See John 13. It is very necessary to our peace and strength to repair constantly to Christ with confession and prayer. See 1 John 1: 6, 7. The laver was made out of the looking-glasses of the women. See Ex. 38: 8. It was a good use for them, and was altogether appropriate, for the Word of God is compared to a mirror for its revealing qualities, and to water for cleansing. See Jas. 1: 23; Eph. 5: 26.

60. The Anointing Oil and the Incense.

Exodus 30:22-38. The anointing oil was extremely rich and costly. Pure myrrh; sweet cinnamon, imported probably from Sumatra or China; sweet calamus, the product of India or Mesopotamia; cassia, from Java, were the principal ingredients. Such a combination must have produced a delightful fragrance! The use of this oil was restricted to the holy service of the Tabernacle, and reminds us of "the unction of the Holy One"—i. e., the anointing by the Holy Spirit. See Lev. 8:10-12 and 1 John 2: 20.

Christ is the Anointed, and he sheds the oil of joy on our heads, as one by one we yield ourselves to his service. See Acts 2: 33. The oil was not to be poured

on "the flesh of man." We must deny the flesh, with its affections and lusts, that we may be filled with the Spirit. Calvary before Pentecost!

The incense also was carefully prepared, and thus we are taught that prayers should not be uttered rashly or lightly; but with reverence, deliberation and forethought.

61. Wise Workmen for the Tabernacle.

Exodus 31:1-18. Whenever there is special work to be done God will find and endow the men who are to do it. "I have called, . . . I have filled, . . . I have appointed," etc. There is a niche for each of us in God's service, to each a special work is given; and for each those talents are imparted, which are requisite and adequate. "Created unto good works," says the Apostle, "which God has before prepared that we should walk in them," Eph. 2:10. The talent for the sphere and the sphere for the talent—God's call binding the two with golden clasps.

But amid all our work for God there should be Sabbath-keeping—*i. e.*, the inner rest of the soul. We are by nature full of our own works and schemes and plans; but when the spirit of rest enters us, all this is altered. Then we are not agents, but instruments; we do not work for God, but God works through us; we enter into his rest, and cease from ourselves. See Heb. 4:10.

62. Aaron's Golden Calf Offends the Lord.

Exodus 32:1-14. The people never thought of taking Aaron as a substitute for Moses, because they instinctively recognized his moral weakness. Though he was dressed in the garments of the high priest, he was essentially a weak man. This came into evidence:

(1) *By his reply to the people.* When they demanded the calf he ought to have met them with an indignant negative; but instead, and to prevent the unpopularity which such an attitude might have evoked, he contented

himself with putting difficulties in the way of their project. "Surely," he thought, "they will never go on with their mad scheme, if they have to pay for it with their jewels." But the event did not justify his expectations.

(2) *By his reply to Moses.* "There came out this calf." It was the furnace, not I, that did it. "Blame my heredity, environment, companions," says the wrongdoer. The weak becomes the sinful one. Strong Son of God, help us! Make us strong! See Jer. 15:20.

63. Moses Breaks the Tables and Burns the Calf.

Exodus 32:15-24. There was no weak compromise on the part of Moses. He cast the tables from his hands as though he felt that the covenant between God and the Hebrew race was hopelessly broken. He remonstrated with Aaron, destroyed the calf, and appointed the tribe of Levi as the executors of divine justice. How striking the act that forced the people to drink the dust of the golden calf! Men *always* have to drink the dust of their idolatries. You cannot make an idol without growing into the likeness of your idol and becoming, some day, nauseated with it.

As Israel turned from the splendors that shone on the summit of Sinai to fashion the calf, and found that the end of those things was misery, so those who turn from the Saviour, who is the brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of his Person, pierce themselves through with many sorrows and perish. See Heb. 12:25.

64. Moses Punishes Idolaters and Prays for the People.

Exodus 32:25-35. The heart of Moses was full of that wonderful new word, *atonement*. For many days Jehovah had been speaking to him about it. But he seemed to feel that on this occasion, the blood of goats and bulls could not avail to put away the black transgression of his people. Then there arose within him the

noble resolve to which he gave expression, when he returned by the well-worn path to the summit of Sinai.

His voice was very broken as he commenced to plead. Mark that unfinished sentence, "If thou wilt forgive their sin—!" It was arrested by a burst of uncontrollable emotion. Can we finish it? "If thou wilt forgive, thou wilt act worthily of thyself and bind us to thee forever; but if not, and if the blood of beasts does not avail, let me be their atoning sacrifice, and blot me from thy book!" See Rom. 9:1-3, R. V.

65. The Angel Leader and the Human Intercessor.

Exodus 33:1-11. Moses knew that his people were forgiven, but it hurt him to hear that an angel was henceforth to lead them. See 32:34. The burden of two and a half millions of people was too heavy for him to carry, even with angel-help. He must somehow secure the withdrawal of that sentence, "I will not go up in the midst of thee." He spoke of it to the people, who awoke to realize what their sin had forfeited, and put off their jewels. But their leader gave himself to prayer. Since Sinai was too far to climb, he seems to have pitched his own tent outside the camp as a temporary meeting-place with God; and when *he* entered it the people said: "Look! he is going to pray for us;" and he spake with God face to face, as we may, of what was in his heart. See John 16:26, 27.

66. God's Presence Promised and His Glory Shown.

Exodus 33:12-23. When Moses found himself alone with God he made two outstanding requests:

(1) *For God's presence.* "If thou dost not go with me, I cannot go; angels are not enough. They are fair, and sweet, and strong, but I want *thee*. Wilt thou leave me—a lonely man—to thread these desert wastes with this people? Thou hast put the burden on me, and thou canst not leave me to carry it alone!" It is good when a man gets to close grips with God, and it was to him according to his faith. See v. 14.

(2) *For a vision of God's glory.* Again the answer came as he asked—"I will put thee in a cleft of the rock." The sides of the mountains are rent and scarred; but who can tell the anguish of him who was "marred" for us? Yet, in the cleft wound of his side there is room for us to hide. "Rock of Ages, cleft for me!" On Calvary, a niche was hollowed out in which a world of sinners may find shelter.

67. The Covenant of the Law Renewed.

Exodus 34:1-17. Before we can behold the vision of Eternal Love we must be willing to fulfil three conditions: (1) *Earliness*: "My soul, be ready in the morning." (2) *Solitude*: "No man shall come up with thee." (3) *The open heart*: "That God may write there what he will." God is always passing by and covering us with the shadow of his hand, and proclaiming his loving kindness and tender mercy. He keeps mercy for thousands, and limits the entail of sin to the third and fourth generation.

Whenever we get near to God we should begin to think of and pray for others. As the last notes of the divine procession were dying away Moses bowed his head and worshiped, saying, "Let the Lord go in the midst of us and forgive." It was as though he said, "If thou art a God like that, thou art the God that stiff-necked people need. Go with us, therefore, for thou canst bear with us." He went on to ask that they might be pardoned, and that God would account them his heritage. His request was more than granted! God entered into covenant with them and promised to drive out their enemies on conditions which he proceeded to enumerate.

68. Moses Brings the Renewed Tables of the Law.

Exodus 34:18-35. For forty days, with no sustenance from bread or water, Moses abode on the Mount—absorbed with a passion of love and awe—not count-



Moses with the Renewed Tables of the Law.

From Painting by J. R. Henning Modern British Artist.

ing the hours which passed like a dream. He talked with God as a man face to face with his friend; but he was completely unaware of the marvelous transformation which this holy intercourse was effecting. At God's dictation he wrote out the covenant, as we have it in this Book, and finally God gave him the two tables of stone, on which he had imprinted his autograph.

With these in his hand Moses descended to the plain, unconscious that his face shone. See 2 Cor. 3:18, R. V. The Apostle urges that we, as Christians, should first behold, and then reflect the glory of Jesus. We must be mirrors, for the purpose of shedding his light amongst our fellow-men; and in the effort to do this we shall become transfigured into his glorious beauty from one degree to another. The crowning glory of that transfiguration will be our unconsciousness: "*He wist not.*"

69. The Sabbath and Offerings to God.

Exodus 35:1-19. Very significantly this chapter commences with the reiteration of the Rest-day. Perhaps the people needed to be reminded that, amid all the din of preparation for the new Tabernacle, they were not to allow their work, however noble the object, to break in on the Sabbath-keeping of the camp. He then proceeded to enumerate the character of the gifts that were required. Those who had costly heirlooms had nothing too good; and they who could only bring the acacia wood of the desert were welcome to bring that. Women who were clever with their hands might spin the flax or weave the soft white wool of the Angora goat. A wide variety of work was offered, which reminds us of 1 Cor. 12:4, and following. Repeatedly he urged the word "willing-hearted," and the Hebrew phrase signifies a heart driven by a holy purpose. Tennyson uses the phrase, "Whose heart drove him on like a goad." There was no crack of the taskmaster's whip. "The love of God constrained." "O love that will not let me go!"

70. Free Gifts for the Tabernacle.

Exodus 35:20-29. The people departed to think over their response to Moses' appeal, and then returned. How long had elapsed? Did Moses speak in the morning, and did they return in the cool of the evening? And what a rich profusion of gifts did they contribute! Here one of the princes brought a priceless jewel; here again were crowds of ordinary people bringing precious amulets, ear-rings, nose-rings and other jewelry, in which Orientals take great delight. Large numbers of women brought their metal mirrors, and out of them the laver was afterward constructed. These things were piled in heaps, and we are told that the Spirit drove the people to give till the artificers exclaimed that they had more than enough.

But what would the gifts have availed apart from the divinely designated artists! We, too, are called to build the Temple of God. Ask the Spirit of God to show you your place and equip you for it. Some sphere will be probably indicated by your natural aptitude; but be sure that you are filled with the Spirit of God.

71. Wise-hearted Workers for the Tabernacle.

Exodus 35:30—36:8. What were the driving motives of this marvelous outburst of generosity? They remembered that Jehovah had brought them forth from Egypt, destroying their foes and liberating them from slavery. Again they heard the rattle of the pursuing chariots and the clash of arms! Again they thought of the march through the oozy bottom of the sea, whilst the walls of water stood on either side, irradiated with the glow of the cloud of fire!

With full hearts they turned to God, saying, "The best we have is thine. Thou art worthy to receive glory and honor and riches and power and blessing, for thou hast redeemed us." Upon the heels of that thought came the remembrance of the constant provision for their daily needs. The manna had fallen; the water had

gushed from the flinty rock; Amalek had fled! These were the fountains that fed the springs of generosity. But have we not similar reason? "I beseech you, therefore, brethren, *by the mercies of God*, yield yourselves." See Rom. 12:1, 2.

72. The Tabernacle and its Furniture.

Exodus 39:32-43. Ten times over we are told that all the work was done, as *the Lord commanded Moses*. See v. 43. Their obedience had been minute and exact; and the blessing of the Lawgiver was the outward and audible assurance of the divine "Well done." We are carried forward in thought to anticipate the verdict, which will be passed upon our own life-work. Will our Lord, when he beholds it, be able to say that it has all been wrought according to his pattern and in obedience to his command? Alas, that is too much to expect! We have been, too often, disobedient and unprofitable. We would love to hear the Master say "Well done! I know thy works, and thy love, and faith, and patience, and that thy last works are more than the first." But is there not reason to fear that he may say: "I have found no works of thine perfected before my God"? See Rev. 2:19; 3:2. Let us repent, seek forgiveness and start again!

73. Directions for Erecting the Tabernacle.

Exodus 40:1-16. On the new year's day of the second year of the exodus Moses was bidden to rear up the Tabernacle, and with his own hand to place each article in its specified position. With what joy must those commands have fallen on his ears! We are reminded of the words of Robert Moffat, when he was completing the translation of the entire Bible into the language of the Bechuanas: "When I had finished the last verse I could hardly believe that I was in the world. My emotions found vent by my falling on my knees and thanking God for his grace and goodness in giving me strength to accomplish my task." Under similar cir-

cumstances Dr. Paton says that he pitched his hat into the air and danced round and round his printing-press. Let us build our life, piece by piece, in the same spirit—not with wood, hay and stubble, but with gold, silver and precious stones—so that at the close we may be able to say, “I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.”

74. The Tabernacle Set Up and Dedicated.

Exodus 40:17-38. At the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice all was finished. Moses had placed the table on the right and the candlestick on the left of the holy place; had set the incense-altar near the veil; had washed in the laver, and had anointed it and all its vessels. The Ark had been hidden behind the veil, and Aaron invested in his robes. Then the congregation, deeply moved, retired to their tents and night settled on the mountains. Moses also retired from the scene, full of thankfulness. See Ps. 90:16, 17.

They had hardly left the structure when the cloud that had guided their march settled down upon it, and the glory of the Lord—“the Shechinah”—shone within the Tabernacle itself. Moses immediately hastened back, and found the Presence of God so manifestly in possession that he dared not enter. Behold! the tabernacle of God was with men. So in after years the Divine Word dwelt in the mortal body of Jesus. See John 1:14, 2 Cor. 5:1, Rev. 21:3. This is the worthy close of this great book of the Exodus.

(For Review Questions on Sections 37-74 see page 110.)

REVIEW QUESTIONS ON EXODUS

OUTLINE.

- (a) Into what three natural geographical sections may we divide the book?
- (b) For each of these divisions mention three leading events.

INTRODUCTION.

- (c) What does the title of the book mean and how does it apply to the contents?
- (d) Mention some points of resemblance between the events of this book and the experience of the individual soul.

SECTIONS 1-36. CHAPTERS 1-17.

(Each question applies to the paragraph of corresponding number in the Comments.)

1. What was the first move in the new policy to repress Israel?
2. How did the effort to destroy the children fail?
3. How did God provide a helper in Pharaoh's own household?
4. How did Moses mistakenly begin his work before God directed him?
5. How did God summon him from the unconsumed bush?
6. What commission was he given?
7. With what three signs did God meet Moses' first hesitation?
8. What excuses did he offer and how were they met?
9. By what acts of obedience did he begin his mission?
10. How was the request of the Israelites met by the king of Egypt?
11. To whom did Moses turn when his oppressed brethren turned against him?
12. How did God endorse his promises by his Name?
13. From what line of ancestry came the two brothers whom God was now using?
14. What occurred at Moses' first interview with Pharaoh?

15. What was the first judgment upon Egypt and what was its effect?
16. How did the frogs come and how were they removed?
17. Describe the two plagues of insects. Why was Goshen spared?
18. What plagues next came upon cattle and upon the bodies of men? Why did Pharaoh still resist?
19. What further blow fell from heaven and with what effect?
20. What compromise did Pharaoh try to make with Moses and why was it not accepted?
21. Describe the plagues of locusts and of darkness. What effect did they have on Pharaoh?
22. What was Moses' final warning to the king?
23. What feast did the Israelites celebrate before their departure? Why and how?
24. What instructions were given as to its annual observance?
25. How did the death of all the first-born affect Pharaoh and his subjects?
26. How long had Israel dwelt in Egypt?
27. Why did Jehovah claim the first-born?
28. How were the fleeing Israelites guided from before and how pursued from behind?
29. How were the frightened people encouraged and quieted at the Red Sea?
30. Why were the Egyptians destroyed and the Israelites saved?
31. What three great truths about God did Moses declare in his song of praise?
32. What was to be learned from the experiences at Marah and Elim?
33. How did God meet the murmurings caused by hunger?
34. What does the manna teach regarding our own spiritual food?
35. How was the memory of the manna to be preserved?
36. How was water provided for the thirsty and victory for the attacked?

SECTIONS 37-74. CHAPTERS 18-40.

(Each question applies to the paragraph of corresponding number in the Comments.)

37. Of what did Moses bear witness to his father-in-law?
38. How did he benefit by Jethro's advice?

39. How were the people prepared for their covenant with God?
40. Of what was the sacred and smoking mount an object lesson?
41. What are the two-fold duties enjoined in the "Ten Words"?
42. Why did the people fear while Moses drew near to God?
43. What was the law of the seventh year and of the seventh day? What were the three great annual feasts?
44. How were the people to possess the Promised Land, and how treat its inhabitants?
45. How was this covenant between God and Israel sealed?
46. How did God prepare Moses to receive his instructions concerning worship?
47. Describe the Ark and tell its spiritual teaching.
48. Do the same for the table and the candlestick.
49. Describe the curtains. How do they suggest Christ's human nature?
50. Where did the veil hang? What did it typify?
51. What great truth finds expression in the brazen altar?
52. Of what is the oil an emblem?
53. What do the jewels in the breastplate suggest about our own names?
54. What was the message of the golden plate worn on the high priest's forehead?
55. What part did water, oil and blood each take in the consecration of the priests?
56. Where was the blood placed in the consecration of the priests and why?
57. What provision was made for a continual daily offering unto God?
58. How did the altar of incense represent intercessory prayer?
59. Why was atonement money required of all? Of what does the laver remind us?
60. How were the anointing oil and the incense kept distinct and sacred? Why?
61. How were workmen found and prepared to construct the Tabernacle?
62. How did Aaron show his weakness in the making of the golden calf?
63. In what ways did Moses show his righteous anger?
64. How did Moses check the sin? and how make atonement for the sinners?

65. What substitute was proposed for the Divine Presence?
66. What did God grant in answer to Moses' petition?
67. What did God promise in renewing the Covenant of the Law?
68. What were in Moses' hands and what was on his face when he returned again from Sinai?
69. What offerings were needed from the people for the Tabernacle?
70. How did the people respond with their gifts?
71. To whom was the erection of the Tabernacle entrusted?
72. What made all the work of the Tabernacle so excellent?
73. When and how was the Tabernacle to be erected?
74. How did God show his approval of the completed work?

III
THE BOOK OF LEVITICUS

OUTLINE OF LEVITICUS

A MANUAL OF WORSHIP AT THE TABERNACLE

I. DIRECTIONS REGARDING THE OFFERING

OF SACRIFICES1—7.

1. *The Five Offerings*1: 1—6: 7.
Burnt: 1; Meal: 2; Peace: 3; Sin:
4; Trespass: 5:1—6:7.
2. *The Laws Regarding the Disposal of
Each of These Offerings*6: 8—7: 38.

II. THE CONSECRATION OF AARON AND HIS

SONS TO THE PRIESTHOOD8—10.

1. *Their Consecration by Moses*.....8.
2. *Aaron's Offerings for Himself and
the People*9.
3. *Sin of Nadab and Abihu and the
Law as to Eating Holy Things*...10.

III. LAWS REGARDING CEREMONIAL PURITY.11—16.

1. *Clean and Unclean Beasts, Fishes
and Fowls*11.
2. *The Purification of Women and
Their Offerings*12.
3. *Leprosy—Laws, Signs, Sacrifices*...13, 14.
4. *Cleansing from Bodily Unclean-
nesses*15.
5. *The Great Annual Atonement for
Sin.*16.

IV. THE LAWS OF HOLINESS AND SACRED

FESTIVALS17—26.

1. *Various Laws Regarding Holiness of
Life*17—22, 24.
2. *The Yearly Religious Festivals*23.
(1) Passover, (2) First-Fruits, (3)
Trumpets, (4) Tabernacles.
3. *Sabbatical Year and Year of Jubilee*.25.
4. *Blessings for Obedience; Chastise-
ment for Disobedience*26.

V. APPENDIX ON VOWS, TITHES AND THINGS

DEVOTED27.

THE BOOK OF LEVITICUS

This name was also given by the Greek translators, and is the equivalent of the opening Hebrew word. The book treats of the laws relating to the ritual, services and sacrifices of the Hebrew religion, the superintendence of which was in the hands of the Levitical priesthood. It is principally concerned with the duties of the priests.

The book falls into four principal sections and an appendix:

1. The Laws as to Sacrifices, including the five offerings and the connection of the priests with each of these offerings: 1: 1—7: 38.

2. The Institution of the Priesthood: 8—10.

3. The Laws Relating to Purification, including the great Day of Atonement: 11—16.

4. The Laws Concerning Holiness and Sacred Festivals: 17—26.

5. An Appendix on Vows, Tithes and Things Devoted: 27.

Several passages plainly indicate the Wilderness as the place of writing, as 19: 23. Others that the settlement in Canaan had taken place, as 18: 27. The former were probably in the first draft by Moses, while Samuel and others were doubtless responsible for recording further enactments.

THE BOOK OF LEVITICUS

1. Burnt-Offerings of the Herd, Flocks and Fowls.

Leviticus 1:1-17. Jehovah speaks with Moses, not from Sinai's summit, but from the Tabernacle, because he has come to dwell with men on the earth. Compare Exodus 20:22 and 25:8. The early chapters of this book contain the law of the offerings. He who was to be worshiped prescribed the manner in which he was to be approached. These sacrifices also were intended to typify the great offering which our Lord would one day, in the fulness of time, consummate on Calvary. Here we have the burnt-offering, presenting the more general aspect of our Lord's self-giving. It represents his entire surrender to the Father's will. See Heb. 10:8, 9. The principal feature of this offering was that the whole body of the victim was consumed and ascended in fire and smoke. The Hebrew word comes from a root which means to *ascend*. Three grades of this offering were permitted—herd, flock, fowl—to bring it within the means of all, and to typify the varying degrees in which men apprehend and value Christ.

2. Meal-Offerings with Oil and Incense.

Leviticus 2:1-16. The meal-offering, which is described in this chapter, portrayed in emblem the perfect character of our Lord. He was as fine flour, of the best quality, without grit or coarseness. There was nothing uneven, nothing rough and harsh, nothing unseemly or forbidding in him. He was anointed with the oil of the Holy Spirit; his perfect obedience was fragrant to the Father, and should be so to us; there was no leaven of guile or hypocrisy in his constitution. See Eph. 5:2. We should feed on his holy character by meditation, and resemble it in daily living. The

interposition of the priest was an essential feature of the ancient ritual, informing us that our prayer and self-surrender are acceptable to God through our Saviour. We are also reminded by verse 14 that we are called to be a kind of first-fruits of his creatures to the Creator. See Jas. 1:18.

3. Peace-Offerings from the Herd and the Flocks.

Leviticus 3:1-17. The Lord Jesus has been set forth in chapter 1 as the burnt-offering in relation to God; and in chapter 2, as the meal-offering in relation to man. We are now to regard him as the peace-offering, to rectify the disturbed relations between God and man. It supplied food for God in the fat devoured by the sacred fire upon the altar, it fed the priests in those parts specially reserved for them, Lev. 7:33, 34; but the worshiper also might participate, 7:15. Thus it was a feast that brought into close relations God, priest and people, and it furnished a beautiful typical picture of the truth taught in 1 John 1:3, "Our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ."

Before sitting at the sacrificial feast the offerer laid his hand on the victim's head, as though to transfer his sins; and we are reminded that we cannot feast on Christ as our Passover unless we have been first pardoned and justified through his death.

4. Sin-Offerings for Priests and Congregation.

Leviticus 4:1-21. The sweet savor offerings have now been considered. They are all concerned with consecration and communion. We now approach the sacrifices for sin; and first, for sins of ignorance. Here provision is made for the anointed priest, for the whole assembly, for the ruler and for one of the common people. Do we realize sufficiently the sinfulness of our sins of omission *i. e.*, of coming short of God's glory? See how much they cost! The innocent victim had to suffer; as afterward our Lord suffered without the gate, that he might make an atonement and sanctify

his people with his own blood. We learn what the Apostle meant when he described our Lord as being "made sin for us."

After certain portions had been placed upon the altar of burnt-offering, the remainder of the carcass was burned without the camp, as though it were an altogether polluted thing. Note that the sin of the priest was deemed to require a more costly offering than that of the ordinary man, because he had sinned against fuller light.

5. Sin-Offerings for Rulers and People.

Leviticus 4:22-35. The character of the sin for which the sin-offering was presented is expressed by the words, repeated again and again, "through ignorance," or "unwittingly," or "through error." It is the word used of the unintentional man-slayer, who, without premeditation, might kill another. See Num. 35. God's Word distinguishes deliberate, wilful sin from that of which it may be said, "they know not what they do"; or, "I wot that through ignorance ye did it." See Luke 23:34; Acts 3:17. Whilst the blood of the offering for the priest and the congregation was brought into the holy place and sprinkled seven times before the Lord, the blood of the offerings for the ruler or the individual was sprinkled only on the horns of the altar. The hue of the sin was not so dark in the latter case as where there was greater knowledge of God's will. In Luke 12:47, 48, our Lord makes a similar distinction.

6. Trespass-Offerings for Various Sins.

Leviticus 5:1-13. The sin-offering was closely resembled by the trespass-offering; but they differed in this: that the former was meant to fix the thought of the sinner rather on the evil of his character, and that there was within him a root of bitterness and a poisonous fountain. But the latter deals with the acts of transgression to which this evil character gives rise,

and more especially with the harm which it inflicts on others. We need to confess our trespasses as often as we eat our daily bread; and it is very reassuring that, through the blood of Jesus, God forgives all our trespasses. See Col. 2:13.

It is very touching to notice the provision made for the very poor. Mary, the mother of our Lord, had to content herself with the two pigeons or turtle doves of verse 11. But none of us are exempted. We cannot come to the close of any day without kneeling to confess our sins and asking that we may be sprinkled from an evil conscience.

7. Trespass-Offerings and Restitution.

Leviticus 5:14—6:7. The root idea of the Hebrew word for trespass is "failure of duty through negligence." In addition to the sin itself, which is against God, as the august Custodian of the law and order of the universe, the injury, which such negligence inflicts upon one's neighbor, must be met by a compensation and fine. Any sum which another has lost through us should, of course, be repaid, and a fifth part added, if required. But probably, the main lesson of the trespass-offering is that we cannot injure any fellow-creature without offending against God. Our offence penetrates beyond the thin veil of humanity and the visible universe into the unseen Holy.

In dealing with all failures in regard to our fellows, there are three points, therefore, always to bear in mind: *First*, we must confess the sin to God; *second*, we must seek out our brother and confess to him, and ask his forgiveness, that we may win him, as our Lord said, Matt. 18:15; and, *third*, we must make restitution, with an addition. This was the teaching under the Law. Should it be less under the Gospel of love?

8. Law of the Burnt-Offering.

Leviticus 6:8—23. Notice well the teaching of this paragraph, which has special reference to the fire,

which was to be kept always burning upon the altar. Thrice is the injunction repeated, vs. 9, 12, 13. As it originally descended from God, 9:24, so it was to be ever maintained by the watchful care of the priests.

It is interesting to notice that a different Hebrew word is used for the fire that burnt on the great brazen altar within the sacred enclosure from that which consumed the sin-offering without the camp, 4:12. That symbolized the wrath of God against sin, whilst this symbolizes his love and grace, which descend to burn in human hearts. The Apostle was very conscious of the latter when he said: "The love of Christ constraineth us." Whenever you feel the glow of that fire in your heart be sure to nurse it. Ask that it may burn hotly. See Song of Sol. 8:6. It must be fed by the continual fuel of God's Word, consumed and absorbed in meditation. But remember the teaching of the latter part of this paragraph: Only holy souls may partake aught of the Heavenly Bread. "Let a man examine himself!"

9. Laws of the Sin- and Trespass-Offerings.

Leviticus 6:24—7:10. The peculiar sanctity of the flesh of the sin- and the trespass-offerings is clearly emphasized throughout this paragraph. Notice the repeated phrase, "it is most holy." This seems intended to emphasize the holiness of our Lord, who, though he became a sin-offering for us all, knew no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth. He was searched with the minutest scrutiny, but Pilate, Herod and Judas agreed in asserting that in him there was no fault. He was holy, harmless and separate from sin.

Never was our Lord more absolutely "the Holy One of God" than when he was numbered with the transgressors and bare the sin of many. The Cross was the climax of his obedience. How watchful we should be against anything that might soil us in our handling of sin in its infinite ramifications. As the priests, who dealt with these offerings, were permitted to eat of the

flesh, are we not reminded that we derive the richest sustenance of our spiritual life by humble, penitent and thankful meditation on the finished work of the Cross?

10. Law of the Peace-Offering.

Leviticus 7:11-21. Here begins the law of the peace-offerings, containing additional directions to those given in chapter 3. They are classified as (1) thank-offerings, (2) vow-offerings and (3) voluntary-offerings. When the soul is full of gratitude, as was Hannah when Samuel was granted her in answer to prayer, what is more natural than that it should render some tangible recognition to him, from whom cometh every good and perfect gift!

We are ready enough to cry to God in times of great sorrow, but are too forgetful of his benefits when the cloud passes and the sun shines again. In Israel the recognition took the form of a feast, in which the divine fire and the suppliant seem to feed together. The careful prohibition of the flesh remaining over was probably to teach that fresh mercies call for new songs. It had the further result of enforcing a liberal distribution of food amongst the poor. See also the connection of this thought with Ps. 16:10.

11. Things Forbidden; the Portion of the Priests.

Leviticus 7:22-38. The eating of the fat and the blood was prohibited; the first probably during the pilgrimage, the latter in perpetuity. See Lev. 3:17. When we are told that the disobedient soul must be cut off, it refers probably to the excommunication which the priest pronounced until the offender had repented and was reinstated in the privileges of God's house. The *waving* of parts of the victim consisted in the priest placing his hands beneath those of the offerer, who held the piece to be waved, and moving them slowly backward and forward before the Lord, to and from the altar. The *heaving* was performed by slowly lifting the pieces upward and downward. These

movements signified that the pieces, though not burnt at the altar, were specially consecrated to God's service.

The shoulder is the emblem of government and strength; the breast of the affections. We specially need to meditate on these aspects of our Lord's character. It may be that the action referred to in Acts 13:3 meant that the Church waved the two first missionaries as a votive-offering to God.

12. Aaron and His Sons Consecrated.

Leviticus 8:1-17. Here we have our Lord's eternal Priesthood presented in miniature. The whole congregation had to be present, because each had a claim on Aaron's services, as each believer has a claim on Christ's. Each portion of Aaron's dress told of some trait or feature in Jesus' fitness to stand for us—the girdle of his zeal; the robe and ephod of his beauty and glory; the breastplate that our names are written on his heart; the Urim and Thummim of his wisdom to direct; the mitre of his holiness.

The garments of the priests, the sons of Aaron, remind us of the spotless dress in which we should be habited, ever remembering that in the lowliest act we may minister to God. We, too, must be anointed, as Jesus was, with the fresh oil of Pentecost. The identification of our Lord with his people is typically set forth in the joint laying of hands on the victims. Jesus had no sins of his own, but he bore our sins, and stood with us in the sinner's place that he might raise us to his throne.

13. Offerings at Their Consecration.

Leviticus 8:18-36. The blood of the ram of consecration was used in a remarkable way, to symbolize deep truths. On Aaron's ear to express Christ's obedience unto death. On the right thumb, to express Christ's willingness to do all that the Father required of him. On the right toe, to express that all his ways pleased God. Our Lord was washed in his baptism,

anointed with oil on the Mount of Transfiguration, and received the final baptism of consecration in blood on the Cross. The sons of Aaron were treated in like manner, to show that in all these things Christians are called to be like Christ. See Matt. 20:22, 23. This remark specially applies to those who have been called to lead the flock.

Consecration, according to the Hebrew word, means *filling the hand*. Too many of us suppose that the consecrated soul *renounces* all—nay, it *receives* all. The nets are full of fish; the baskets are full of the broken pieces; the soul is full of grace and glory. Let us keep the charge of the Lord till the day break, and we enter the Most Holy Place beyond the veil!

14. Aaron's Offerings for Himself and the People.

Leviticus 9:1–21. In the concluding verses of chapter 8 we read of Aaron and his sons feeding together on the flesh of the consecration-offering; and that for seven days, during which time they were not permitted to leave the Tabernacle—a striking figure of the present position of our Lord and his own, during this dispensation, shut in with God, and awaiting the manifestation of his glory.

May not this eighth day, on which the glory of the Lord appeared, be an emblem of that bright millennial morning when the congregation of Israel shall behold the true Priest issuing from the sanctuary, where he is now hidden from the eyes of men; and with him, when he is manifested, we shall be manifested also, “the companions of his retirement, and the happy participators of his glory?” Oh, that none of us may miss that share in his epiphany, and that now our life may be hidden with Christ in glory! See Col. 3:1–4.

15. A Deed that Turned Joy into Grief.

Leviticus 9:22–10:11. There was a double blessing. First, Aaron blessed the people when he stood against the altar, v. 22, and afterward, when he

came out of the Tabernacle, v. 23. We find here the analogue of the double blessing which our Lord gives his own. When he came from offering his supreme sacrifice on Calvary, which was burnt-offering, peace-offering, sin- and trespass-offerings combined, he blessed his own. We are told that as he blessed them he was borne upward to heaven, Luke 24:51; but we expect another blessing from him, when he shall come forth out of the heavenly Temple and extend his hands in benediction, using perhaps the very words of the ancient benediction. But take care lest you ever introduce strange fire into your worship—*i. e.*, the fire of your own emotions, enthusiasm and excitement. Ponder those mighty words in Lev. 10:3. We must not rush carelessly into the divine presence, though by the blood of Jesus we have been made nigh, Eph. 2:13.

16. The Distinction Between Clean and Unclean.

Leviticus 11:1-23, 41-47. There were good and sufficient reasons for excluding certain animals from Israel's dietary. Devout medical men insist that this is the finest sanitary code in existence, and that many of the diseases of modern life would disappear if it were universally adopted. God made these distinctions matters of religion, that the well-being of his people might be doubly assured. These restrictions were also imposed to erect strong barriers between the chosen people and the heathen. So long as they obeyed, it was clearly impossible to participate in the heathen festivals, where many of these animals were partaken of.

We are not now bound by these enactments. Our Lord made all meats clean, Mark 7:19, R. V. Peter was bidden to kill and eat all manner of creeping things, and his protest was overborne by the assurance that God had cleansed all. See Acts 10:11-16. Religion consist not in outward rites, but in the inward temper. See Heb. 9:10. Note that *touching* was forbidden, because the least contact with evil hurts the soul.

17. Purification after Child-Bearing.

Leviticus 12:1-8. The birth of a boy involved seven days' ceremonial defilement; of a girl, fourteen. Not the child, but the mother, was adjudged to be unclean, securing her a period of retirement and rest. The gracious gradation in the sacrifices made it possible for the poorest to obey, and it is a memorable fact that the mother of our Lord brought two pigeons or doves - meet emblems of her gentle nature—when she presented her babe in the Temple. See Luke 2:24. Our Lord became poor, that through his poverty we might be eternally enriched. In the light of this ceremonial, we are led back to Ps. 51:5, which we must personally and sadly ponder.

The initial rite of the Hebrew religion stood for separation. The parent taught the child to remember that he belonged to a separated race. It was impossible for him to consort with those who were aliens from the commonwealth of Israel. We all need to undergo the circumcision of Christ, which consists in putting away the sins of the flesh and ceasing to trust in our own energy. See Col. 2:11, 12.

18. The Test of Leprosy.

Leviticus 13:1-17. Leprosy was a sort of living death, involving exclusion from the fellowship of the living, and from the sanctuary. Consequently the process of restoration consisted of two stages: readmission, through the cure of disease, into the fellowship of the living, 13:1-59, and then to the camp and sanctuary, through the due performance of prescribed rites, 14:1-32. The enumeration of the symptoms is very deliberate. The priest was required to conduct his examination with the greatest care, lest he should pronounce that to be leprosy which was not really so.

How different this to the sweeping and hasty judgments that we pass on each other! We judge by appearances only, and are not specially concerned to judge righteously. Sin, of which leprosy is the type,

is not a superficial disease; it is "deeper than the skin." See vs. 3, 4, 25, 30, 31, 32, 34. They who know us best are not aware of the secret springs of impure motive, and the polluted things that hold empire within the soul. But the body of sin must be brought to an end at the Cross. See Rom. 6:6.

19. The Law of the Cleansed Leper.

Leviticus 14:1-20. The penalty, when leprosy had unmistakably declared itself, included compulsory severance from the camp, the rent garments, the bare head, the covered lip, the cry "unclean," v. 45. Sin severs us from fellowship with God and his saints, and makes us a source of contamination to all in contact with us, though they may not realize that we are defiling them.

Being cured, the leper was first *restored to the camp*, vs. 1-9. The birds are striking types of death and resurrection. Notice that the blood of one was mingled with fresh, *i. e.*, running, water, because of the perennial freshness of the blood of Christ; and that the ascension of the other, when liberated, is significant of the freedom from the law of sin and death which the soul of the believer experiences through the power of the Holy Spirit. See Rom. 8:1-4.

Secondly, the leper was *restored to the sanctuary*, vs. 10-20. On the eighth day of resurrection, the blood and oil were placed on thumb and toe and ear, because all our senses have been purchased and consecrated to the service of God. Let us, in gratitude for our own cleansing from sin, consecrate ourselves anew to God!

20. The Offerings for Atonement Day.

Leviticus 16:1-14. This chapter contains the ritual of the great day of atonement, when the high priest entered within the veil, and in virtue of the blood sprinkled upon the mercy seat, and still more of the faith exercised therein, Israel was cleansed from every sin before the Lord, v. 30. The death of his two

sons acted as a solemn warning that Aaron should not deviate from the prescribed ceremonial in the smallest particular.

Every step is worthy of notice, each illustrates some feature in the sacrifice of Calvary, each is meant by the Holy Spirit of God to signify something. See Heb. 9:8, 9. The first goat was "for the Lord," representing the work of Christ in its Godward aspect. The second, like the second bird in Lev. 14:6, signified its manward aspect. It is necessary that we should personally avail ourselves of its efficacy. Our faith must "lay its hand on that dear head of thine"! It was necessary that Aaron, as himself a sinner, must first offer for his own sins; and his offerings had to be repeated every year. See the triumphant contrast of Heb. 9:24.

21. The Scapegoat.

Leviticus 16:15-34. The loneliness of the high priest, v. 17; the sprinkling of blood within the veil upon the mercy seat, v. 16; the fragrant incense, emblematic of a well-pleasing offering, v. 13; the confession of sin and its bearing-away into a solitary land, v. 22; the linen garments of simplicity and humility, v. 23; the destruction of the carcasses of the beasts "without the camp," v. 27; the ultimate coming forth of the high priest to bless the people, bringing them the assurance of a finished and accepted work, v. 24, compare Heb. 9:28—all these points are carefully elaborated in the Epistle to the Hebrews.

The fate of the scapegoat was very moving! Laden with the sins of the people, it is led forth through the crowd of penitents, innocent yet execrated, dumb yet eloquent of the doom of the sin bearer, escaping death by the knife, to be forsaken even unto death! So Jesus died, with the cry of "Forsaken" on his lips.

22. "The Life of the Flesh is in the Blood."

Leviticus 17:1-16. Every animal that was slain for food was regarded as a kind of peace-offering, and was



The Scapegoat.

From pictures by Wm. Briggs West. Modern Biblical Artists.

Leviticus 16 : 20-22

therefore slain at the door of the Tabernacle. This law, though it expressed a great principle, was only provisional. It was kept as long as Israel dwelt in the Wilderness, but repealed when they entered the Land of Promise, where their numbers and diffusion would have rendered its strict observance impossible. See Deut. 12:15-24.

Very earnest insistence is laid on the prohibition of blood as an article of diet. See v. 10, etc. The reason of this is in the repeated announcement that the life (or soul) is in the blood, vs. 11 and 14. When we are told that the blood maketh atonement, we learn that it does so because it represents the soul of the victim. Life is given for life, soul for soul.

Thus our Lord gave his blood, *i. e.*, his life or soul, a ransom for many. "He poured out his soul unto death." See Isa. 53:12. It was his blood, not as it was in his veins, but as poured out, that effected the reconciliation. See Eph. 1:7. It is the death of Christ in which the sinner finds peace. Compare Lev. 16:30 and 1 John 1:7.

23. Sabbath, Passover and First-Fruits.

Leviticus 23:1-14. The year of Israel's national life was marked out by high and blessed convocations, which preserved its unity, kept the people in mind of the great past, and kindled high ideals and enthusiasms. There is a divine precedent, therefore, in the observance of the Christian Year, with its holy services and commemorations. In its earlier stages the religious life requires the help of special times and seasons, when it may realize itself and catch sight of the Delectable Mountains or the Golden City.

A pause must be called in life's busy haste, and families should have an opportunity of gathering at solemn ceremonials, participation in which will leave lasting memories with the coming generation. Probably the mature soul outgrows these, and ceases to observe days. See Col. 2:16. But remember that the absence

of the temple in the New Jerusalem did not imply that there was no worship, but that every moment was worship.

24. Wave-Loaves, Trumpets and Atonement.

Leviticus 23:15-32. The Hebrew feasts divide themselves into two groups, connected with the Passover and the Day of Atonement, respectively, and occurring in the first and seventh months of the year. First came the Passover, on the fourteenth day of the first month, followed closely by the Week of Unleavened Bread, and at a distance of seven weeks further on by the Feast of Pentecost (Pentecost is the Greek word for *fifty*; see v. 16).

These three form the first group. Six months afterward, on the tenth day of the seventh month, came the most solemn day in the whole year—the Day of Atonement. It was preceded by the Feast of Trumpets, and followed closely by the Feast of Tabernacles. This was the second group. But each group set forth a distinct aspect of redemption. In the Passover, we are reminded that we were redeemed *from* sin: in the Atonement, that we are redeemed *to* God. Do not forget to find Christ's resurrection in v. 11, and the first-fruits of the Spirit in v. 17.

25. The Feast of Tabernacles.

Leviticus 23:33-44. The annual Feast of Tabernacles was a beautiful custom, when the whole people removed from their dwellings to spend the days and nights in the booths, constructed out of the verdant boughs gathered from woodland and forest. How the children must have reveled in the experience, and what a healthy change it made for them all! The great lesson, of course, was to recall the Wilderness experience of their fathers, during which the Almighty was their fellow-pilgrim.

In figure they confessed that they were still pilgrims and strangers on the earth, and had no abiding city, but

sought one to come. It was the custom of the feast in later years to pour water, drawn from Siloam, on the Temple pavement, in memory of the water supplies of the Wilderness—the rock that followed them. And it was on that occasion that Jesus uttered his memorable appeal. See John 7:37.

26. Light and Bread and the Holy Name.

Leviticus 24:1-23. The words "Before the Lord" are twice repeated in the opening paragraph. The pure lamplight, emblematic of the influence of a religious life; and the showbread, set on the golden table, emblematic of lives of obedience and devotion, which are well-pleasing to God, are both said to be "before the Lord." We are reminded of the command to Abram, "Walk *before me* and be thou perfect;" and of the words of the dying Jacob, "The God *before whom* my fathers, Abraham and Isaac, did walk." This implies the continual consciousness of the presence of God. We all possess what may be termed a sub-consciousness, which lies beneath our ordinary sense. Let that be God filled!

What a pitiable condition that half-breed was in! May we be Israelites indeed, in whom is no guile! How they revered the very name of God. See 3 John 7.

27. The Sabbatic Year and the Jubilee.

Leviticus 25:1-17. As the weekly Sabbath was to give septennial rest for man and beast, so the sabbatical year, returning after six years of unbroken harvests, was to be a rest for the land "unto the Lord." The year of jubilee, at the end of seven weeks of years, gave an opportunity of restoration for the poor and those who had been compelled to alienate their lands. The year of jubilee points onward to the "redemption of the purchased possession," Eph. 1:14, when all the disabilities which have befallen us shall be made good, and we shall regain all that glorious inheritance which was ours

in the divine purpose, but which we have alienated by our sin.

With what joy must thousands have heard the notes of that trumpet sounding out over the land! Yes, and the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. Then incorruption shall inherit the kingdom of God! See 1 Cor. 15:52.

28. Consideration for the Poor.

Leviticus 25:18-34. It was good for the land to lie fallow for one year in seven; and it was a wise provision that it should not be sold in perpetuity. This enactment prevented the stamping out of the small land owners, and the accumulation of the land in the hands of a few wealthy families. Though a man might be compelled by stress of circumstances to sell his little farm to a wealthy creditor, when the fiftieth year came around it returned to his possession and there was no further claim on the part of the creditor against him and his estate.

With what joy must debtors and bondservants have heard the notes of the trumpet ring out. For us, the lesson is that our Lord has proclaimed "the acceptable year of the Lord." All that we lost in Adam is restored to us in the redemption; that is, in Christ Jesus. Nay, we have greatly gained! Where sin abounded, grace has superabounded. For innocence, we have purity; for a garden, a city; for the evening fellowship with God, the knowledge that we are sons and heirs.

29. Freedom in the Year of Jubilee.

Leviticus 25:35-55. If a man, through misfortune, were forced to sell himself into serfdom to meet his debts, he could not be legally retained after the trumpet had sounded; but was free to return to his home and family. His rich neighbor, during the time of his distress, was not to exact usury on any loan that he might make, but must give him food, lodging, and help, with-

out charge. The poor man was to be treated not as a slave, but as a hired servant and fellow-citizen whose engagement was of a temporary character, and who might be redeemed at any time before the jubilee, through friendly interposition of a relative.

Nothing in modern legislation equals the jubilee in the interests of religion, social order, and liberty. Is it to be believed that when we, in our various distresses, go to our Heavenly Father, we shall fare any worse than the poor peasant did at the hands of his rich neighbor? And in Jesus have we not one nigh of kin who will redeem us at all costs?

30. Results of Obedience and Disobedience.

Leviticus 26:1-20. There is a vast contrast between the ideal life of the first thirteen verses of this chapter and the remainder; just the distinction which God ever makes between a life of obedience and faith, and one of disobedience and disbelief. In our inner life we also may have that blessed rain of spiritual grace; the fruitfulness and the peace, the safety and the victory, the old store reaching to the new, the breaking of our bars and the snapping of our yoke.

If these privileges are not yours, think back on your past to ascertain whether you are walking in all God's commandments, or are in anything walking contrary to them. Confess your sins and return, and dare to believe that he will bring you again, if penitent and believing, into the old glad position. But if "ye will not," vs. 14, 18, 21, 23, 27, heavy penalties must befall. God loves us too well to allow us to drift, unwarned and unrestrained, to perdition.

31. Desolation and Captivity for the Stubborn.

Leviticus 26:21-46. Notwithstanding the solemn and appalling pictures placed before Israel in these verses, they forsook the Lord and served other gods. Thus, they brought upon themselves the sore judgments threatened against them, consisting of defeat, scarcity,

wild beasts, pestilence and famine, the horrors of siege and desolation, followed by dispersion to the four winds of heaven. The book of Judges illustrates the first, and the destruction of Jerusalem, as told by Josephus, the last of these plagues.

Under the curse of this chapter the chosen people are suffering to this very hour. Scattered and peeled, wasted and outcast, they are monuments of God's truthfulness to his word. They teach an impressive lesson which the nations of the world would do well to lay to heart. Note that remarkable expression about accepting their punishment, as the necessary condition of forgiveness and restoration. The same condition always holds.

(For Review Questions on the Leviticus Sections see next page).

REVIEW QUESTIONS ON LEVITICUS

OUTLINE.

- (a) For whose special guidance was this book first intended?
- (b) What value has it for us?
- (c) For each of its four chief sections give the principal word suggesting the contents of that section.

INTRODUCTION.

- (d) How does the title of the book fit its subject matter?
- (e) What indications are there that additions have been made to the book as originally written?

SECTIONS 1-31. CHAPTERS 1-26.

(Each question applies to the paragraph of corresponding number in the Comments.)

- 1. What might be used for a burnt-offering? Why burned whole upon the altar?
- 2. What did the meal-offering suggest or teach? Why accompanied by oil and incense, but never by leaven or honey?
- 3. Why could priest and worshiper share with God in the peace-offering?
- 4. How were sins of priests and people, even though ignorantly committed, to be atoned for?
- 5. What must both ruler and common man do to be freed from sin?
- 6. How did the trespass-offering differ from the sin-offering?
- 7. When was restitution required as well as an offering?
- 8. Why must the fire be kept ever burning on the altar?
- 9. Why was the flesh of sin- and trespass-offerings regarded as "most holy"?
- 10. Why could the offerer have his share in the eating of the peace-offering? But was forbidden to do so if he had touched anything unclean?

11. Why was the priests' portion waved or heaved before God?
12. How were Aaron and his sons consecrated for their priestly service?
13. How was the blood of the ram of consecration used and what did this signify?
14. What was necessary before the "glory of the Lord" appeared unto the people?
15. What was the sin of Nadab and Abihu, and why was it so severely punished?
16. What distinction was made between animals that could and others that could not be used for food? Why does this law not apply to us?
17. Why was a mother to present an offering after child-birth?
18. Why was such great care taken in testing for leprosy?
19. How did the ceremonial prescribed for the restoration of a healed leper typify cleansing from sin by the death and resurrection of Christ?
20. How was the same truth taught in the ceremonial of the great Day of Atonement?
21. How was atonement made once each year for the sins of the whole nation?
22. Why was the eating of flesh with blood forbidden?
23. Why are regular religious observances necessary?
24. What were the two great festival periods of the Jewish year?
25. How and why was the Feast of Tabernacles observed?
26. What is the teaching of the candlestick and the show-bread in the Tabernacle?
27. How did the land get its Sabbath rest?
28. How did the Year of Jubilee benefit the poor?
29. What did the Year of Jubilee teach regarding redemption?
30. What gracious promises did God make on condition of obedience?
31. What was to be the fate of the stubborn?

IV

THE BOOK OF NUMBERS

OUTLINE OF NUMBERS

THE EXPERIENCES IN THE WILDERNESS

- I. THE CAMP AT SINAI1:1—10:10.
 1. *The First Numbering and Location of the Tribes*1, 2.
 2. *Location and Duties of the Levites*.3, 4.
 3. *Laws Regarding Lepers, Marital Jealousy and the Nazirites*5, 6.
 4. *Offerings of the Princes*.....7.
 5. *The Golden Lamps and the Consecration of the Levites*8.
 6. *The Passover and the Cloudy Pillar*.9:1—10:10.
- II. FROM SINAI TO THE JORDAN.....10:11—22:1.
 1. *The Departure, the Seventy Elders and "the Graves of Lust"*.....10:11—11:35.
 2. *The Jealousy of Miriam and Aaron*.12.
 3. *The Spies Sent from Kadesh; Their Reports and God's Sentence*.....13, 14.
 4. *Korah's Rebellion; Aaron's Rod* ...16, 17.
 5. *Duties of Priests and Levites; the Water of Purification*18, 19.
 6. *Again at Kadesh; Moses' Sin; Edom's Opposition; Aaron's Death*20.
 7. *The Canaanites; the Fiery Serpent; the Amorities Conquered*.....21—22:1.
- III. IN THE PLAINS OF MOAB22:2—36.
 1. *Balak and Balaam*22—24.
 2. *Baal-peor and the Zeal of Phinehas*.25.
 3. *The Second Numbering; Joshua Chosen*26, 27.
 4. *The Offerings for the Different Holy Days and the Laws of Vows*.....28—30.
 5. *The Conquest of Midian*.....31.
 6. *Division of the Land; Aaron's Death; Levitical Cities; Cities of Refuge*.32—35.
 7. *Additional Laws of Inheritance*36.

THE BOOK OF NUMBERS

In the Hebrew this book is called "In the desert." The ordinary name by which we know it is derived from the two "numberings" of Israel, the former,—chapters 1 to 4,—in the second year of their journey; the latter, chapter 26,—on the borders of Canaan, thirty-eight years afterward.

The early part,—chapters 1 to 10,—appears as a supplement to Leviticus, being occupied with the appointment of the three great families of Levites to their respective departments in the sacred offices. The narrative of the march through the Wilderness is then given as far as 21:20, after which the story of the conquest of the country east of the Jordan is narrated. The long years during which the generation that refused to respond to the faith of Joshua and Caleb were dying off in the Wilderness, lie between chapters 19 and 20, ending with the re-assembling of the congregation at Kadesh for another forward movement. The form of the book is that of a journal in which all the passing occurrences of interest and importance were recorded.

There are several passages in the New Testament which refer to Moses as the author of this book. See 1 Cor. 10:1, 3-6, 8; Heb. 3:2; 9:14; 12:9.

THE BOOK OF NUMBERS

1. Numbered for War; Set Apart for Worship.

Numbers 1:1-4, 16-19, 44-54. This book records two numberings of the host; the first, at Sinai; and the second, thirty-eight years after, on the threshold of Canaan. It is also the book of the Wilderness wanderings, and contains the story of journeys, service, and vicissitude. It is therefore a valuable guide book to the Church in her present stage.

For us, too, there is a census. God numbers his jewels. He keeps an inventory of his people. Not one of them is omitted, however weak or unworthy. "In thy book *all* my members are written." We must be able to tell our pedigree; *i. e.*, we must be assured of our regeneration into God's family. If we are doubtful about our childship to God, we shall be fit for neither campaigning nor fighting. The secret of failure always lies here. The Levites were not included because, in a very special sense, they belonged to God. He therefore was responsible for their well-being as he is for all of us who are united by faith with Christ—the true Aaron.

2. The Substitute for the First-born.

Numbers 3:1-13, 44-51. The Levites were taken, instead of the first-born sons of Israel, to perform the service of the Tabernacle. There were nearly as many Levites as first-born, and the difference was made good by the payment of redemption money on the part of the overplus, vs. 45-48. So each of us has been redeemed by the blood of the Lamb to belong to God and to minister to him! Aaron's family provided the priesthood, vs. 9, 10. The rest of the tribe performed the more irksome duties of ministry and transport.

The Gershonites, as eldest, pitched westward of the Tabernacle, and cared for the hangings and curtains. The Kohathites, because related to Aaron, pitched southward, and had charge of the sacred vessels. The Merarites pitched northward, and had charge of the boards and sockets. It was enough for each to know that his place and charge were God-appointed. Even to carry a pin became honorable, when God had allotted that to a man as his share.

3. The Vow of Separation.

Numbers 6:1-12. The law of the Nazirite is full of instruction, because he is a type of the child of God who is separated from evil, that he may be wholly surrendered and given over to the divine service. Three rules were enjoined. *Not to touch any product of the vine.* If we must have exhilaration and stimulus, let us seek it in the Holy Spirit, not in worldly excitement, Eph. 5:18, 19. *Not to cut the hair.* The unshorn locks signified the dedication of the natural powers to God's service. Let us beware of Delilah. Many are the razors waiting to deprive us of our crown, Judges 16:19. *Not to touch the dead, however dear.* Teaching that the kingdom of God must supersede all earthly ties.

If our separation breaks down, vs. 9-12, we must seek forgiveness and restoration; but the former days will not count. One sin may mar the power of a whole life of saintly testimony.

4. The Nazirite Offering; the Priestly Blessing.

Numbers 6:13-27. Take heed, O Christian soul, who hast dedicated thyself to some lofty purpose, to be warned by the law of the Nazirite! Thy God expects of thee a more careful walk than is required of others. The cups of gaiety of which they drink are not for thee. Shame and contumely may fall to thy lot, from which they escape.

Thou art specially to beware against defiling contact with aught that savors of death—those who are dead in

trespasses and sins. Go with them only to save them, but never to participate in their ways.

If the Nazirite vows were vitiated, even by accident, the time that had elapsed was cancelled. Ah, how many of our days we have rendered void! The beautiful benediction with which the chapter closes has its counterpart in 2 Cor. 13:14. What the human lips spoke on earth, God authenticated from heaven, v. 27. Be very careful for the honor of the Name! 3 John 7.

5. Princely Generosity; the Voice of God.

Numbers 7:1-11, 89. This and the two following chapters conclude the account of the stay at Sinai. The transport of the furniture of the Tabernacle was committed to the Levites, and the wagons, enumerated here, made their work much simpler. *Two* were assigned for hangings and drapery, and *four* for the more solid and cumbersome portions. The sacred vessels were borne on the shoulders of living men—the Kohathites.

Instead of bulking together these twelve gifts, the divine Spirit lingers lovingly over each. In God's book of remembrance each alabaster box is noted by itself. Note that the vessels were not only costly, but filled! "Both of them *full!*" v. 13, etc.

Ponder v. 89. Would that our ears were opened that we might ever hear that voice speaking from between the cherubim, directing in perplexity, and revealing the deep things of God!

6. Lights in God's House; Clean Workmen.

Numbers 8:1-13. It is strange to come on this paragraph about the candlestick amid the preparations for leaving Sinai. But typically it is appropriate, because the people of God are called, in their earthly pilgrimage, to shine as lights in the world.

The beaten work of gold is significant of persecution, and the one lump of gold indicates the essential unity of the Church. The Levites were symbolically cleansed by the water and the razor. This was required for

those who were sprung from a stock so cruel, Gen. 49:7.

Next they were offered to God, *i. e.*, Israel transferred to them the obligations of ministry, which up to this time had been performed by the first-born. As the priest was wont to wave a portion of the sacrifice before God, so Aaron, v. 11. The counterpart of this is Acts 13:3. Missionaries, teachers and others who perform certain functions for us all, may be regarded as wave-offerings.

7. Consecrated to God's Service.

Numbers 8:14-26. The Levites may be taken to represent the Church as distinguished from the rest of mankind, or the little band of pastors, teachers, and missionaries, set apart for the service of the Church. In any case, they needed to be perpetually reminded that sin mingled with the holiest ceremonial, and required the perpetual cleansing of sacrifice. After our holiest services we need to remember that we are unprofitable servants.

From thirty to fifty is the prime of human life. There is no inconsistency between Num. 4:3 and v. 23 here, because a five years' novitiate was required. When we can no longer bear the strain of mind and body, we may still keep the holy charge and minister before the altar of incense, vs. 25, 26. So it was with Zacharias in Luke 1:7, 9. We can intercede as long as we live, and our maintenance will only cease with our lifework.

8. Keeping the Passover.

Numbers 9:1-14. The Passover was celebrated in Egypt, Exod. 12; in the Wilderness, Lev. 1:14; and in the land of Canaan, Joshua 5. The thought of our redemption must underpin *all* the great movements of individuals and the Church. This one was specially memorable, because it led to the institution of "the little Passover," vs. 6, 7. Moses did not hasten to give an answer of his own, but waited upon God. The divine

nature makes allowance for disabilities, over which we have no control. See 2 Chron. 30:13-20.

In the welcome given to strangers, we discover the wideness of God's mercy. We, too, were strangers and foreigners, Eph. 2:19-21. My soul, never forget how thou wast once a stranger to the covenant of promise! Thine were the crumbs of the feast! But God has made thee sit with the children and included thee in the gracious provisions of his covenant!

9. The Cloud Upon the Tabernacle.

Numbers 9:15-23. We cannot decide on the shape of this cloud; whether it was a great cumulus, or spread out over the camp like an umbrella, so as to shelter the people from the sun glare. As the night fell, the shekinah-fire, that burnt at its heart, became apparent. But whether it sheltered by day or illumined by night, it was always the symbol of the divine presence. All this prefigured the guidance and shelter that are afforded to his people by our Lord. Compare John 8:12.

Friends may urge you to change your sphere. The scarcity of your resources and the pressure of your foes may appear to force a move. A nameless fear may suggest that you will never hold your ground. But so long as the cloud doesn't move, you must tarry where you are. Where the cloud broods, the manna falls. "My soul, wait thou only upon God!" Never go in front of God, nor lag behind, nor hesitate to strike your tent, if he leads on.

10. The Trumpets Sound the March.

Numbers 10:1-16. Each trumpet was made of a solid piece of silver. They fulfilled several purposes, summoning an assembly, sounding the march, gathering for battle. They are referred to symbolically in Matthew 24:31, and 1 Cor. 15:52. We are constantly being called to arise and depart! Is not the trumpet calling to-day to a slumbering Church to move out to the evangelization of the world? For a whole year Israel

had sojourned under Sinai. They left Egypt an undisciplined crowd; they had become a nation, and a marshalled host. Each knew his pedigree and standard; every tribe had its appointed place. The soul must visit Sinai, but not live there. It must journey forth to Hermon, Olivet, Calvary. The Church is moving on! Find thy place in the great procession and keep it. Remembered by God and saved from your enemies! Compare v. 9 and Isaiah 52:12.

11. "Come Thou With Us."

Numbers 10:17-36. The invitation of Moses to Hobab is one that we may all give to our friends: "We are journeying to the place of which the Lord hath spoken." We should always be on the alert for those who are not formally united to the Church, and we can always promise that we can do them good. Only good awaits those who travel with their backs to Egypt and their faces toward the Heavenly City. God has prepared for those who love him such good things as it is beyond words to declare. See 1 Cor. 2:9.

And how much we may benefit by such companionships! Hobab was probably Moses' brother-in-law, and Jethro having returned to Midian, he was all the more needed to lead Israel to the best routes and the most suitable halting-places, where shade and water could be found. Such a guide would be invaluable. Ministers are such! For Hobab's reward see Judges 1:16 and 4:11. Who would not follow where the Ark of the Covenant leads, and rest where the cloud broods? John 10:4.

12. The Murmuring Flesh-lovers.

Numbers 11:1-15. We cannot wonder at the people's murmuring. They were unaccustomed to the fatigues of the desert, and had not realized the length of the journey. Let us beware of querulous complaints. See 1 Cor. 10:10. Let us also guard against familiarity with those who have never known God's regenerating

grace. "The mixed multitude" was largely composed of Egyptians, whose evil example spread to the chosen people, Ex. 12:38. When our religious life is low, we tire of angels' food, and our hearts turn back to the world we have left.

Moses' outcry is hardly to be wondered at. He was thoroughly overstrained by the immense demands of his life. But he ought not to have spoken as though the entire weight of the pilgrimage rested on him. His Almighty Friend was bearing and carrying them during "all the days of old." See Isa. 63:9. We must never look at our responsibilities apart from him who makes all grace abound, 2 Cor. 9:8.

13. God's Spirit Upon the Seventy.

Numbers 11:16-25. God's considerateness for his overwrought servant was very tender. He knows our frame and remembers that we are dust. He does not chide, nor keep his anger forever. The remedy for the situation was provided in the appointment and endowment of the seventy elders, who became the germ of the Sanhedrin.

Moses' depression led to unbelief. It seemed impossible to suppose that God could provide a table in the wilderness of such magnitude that in it the whole host could participate. Unbelief says, Can God? Faith answers, God can! See Ps. 78:19. Child of God! God's hand is not waxed short, that it cannot reach to you. Even if we believe not, he remains faithful. 2 Tim. 2:13. This equipment of the elders, v. 25, reminds us that we, too, need to receive the Holy Spirit, first for our sanctification in character, and then for our service and office. This is the special characteristic of Pentecost, Acts 2:1-4.

14. "The Graves of Lust."

Numbers 11:26-35. It is delightful to note the proof of the nobility of Moses' nature in the answer he gave

to the tidings concerning Eldad and Medad. They might not be of the designated group of elders, and might not have gone out to the Tabernacle, as in v. 16. They remind us of the unordained and simple disciples of Acts 11:19, etc. But there was no envy in Moses' nature. He would have been only thankful if all had reached a degree of grace even beyond his own attainment.

The quails came. They flew in prodigious flocks, which darkened the air. Exhausted by their long flight, they hovered within three feet of the ground, and so were easily captured. But the passionate haste in eating brought its own terrible nemesis to the Israelites. The story became engraved in the very name given to their halting place, Ps. 106:15. My soul, beware lest thou also be precipitated by thy passionate desires into that grave! Gal. 5:17.

15. God Protects Moses Against Criticism.

Numbers 12:1-15. This Ethiopian wife may have been Zipporah, or some other woman whom Moses married after his first wife's death. That Moses, the great lawgiver and leader, who could rule a turbulent multitude and face the great king of Egypt, should take the taunts of his brother and sister so quietly, indicates how deep and far-reaching had been the transformation of his character. Compare Exodus 2:12, etc. "Fret not thyself because of evildoers. . . . Rest in the Lord and wait patiently for him." Ps. 37.

When we hand our cause over to God he comes down, v. 5. He rebukes the enemy and avenger. Be faithful to him and you may reckon on his faithfulness to you! That commendation of faithfulness, which Moses received, may be won by all! See Mark 13:34.

Our intercession may bring pardon and healing; but sin leaves its mark, v. 15. You are shut out of the enjoyment of the camp, and the march is delayed. Ponder James 3:5, 6,

16. The Spies Sent to Canaan.

Numbers 12:16—13:20. By comparing the opening verses with Deut. 1:19–22, it appears that the suggestion about the spies emanated from the people, and that their proposal was graciously acquiesced in by God. But let us remember that it is a profound mistake to spy out or criticize the land or lot into which we are being led. We are almost certain to see the difficulties apart from the grace, and they sometimes appear to be insurmountable.

It is better to await with calm trust the unfoldings of divine providence. The book of the future is in the hands of the Lamb that was slain, Rev. 5:7, 8. Take no thought for to-morrow! Go steadily on! God will go before you, and cleave your way! Unbelief sees giants and spells them with "G"; faith sees God, and spells giants with "g." "Looking unto the promise of God," Abraham "wavered not," Rom. 4:20.

17. The Majority and Minority Reports.

Numbers 13:21–33. It was August. Esheol lay southeast of Hebron. Its sloping hills were covered with choice grapevines, the clusters of which weighed ten to twelve pounds. The tall, muscular Canaanites presented a strong contrast to the more diminutive Egyptians. The spies compared the Canaanites with themselves, instead of with Almighty God. Do not look at God through circumstances, but at circumstances through God. There is no land worth possessing which has not its giants; but, like Caleb, faith looks not at giants, but to the living God. See 14:8. The doubters said *Can God?* Caleb affirmed, *God can!* Only follow God fully! Be utterly yielded to him. Present yourself to God as alive from the dead, and eternally united to the living Christ; then he will bruise Satan under your feet and make you tread upon the lion and adder, Ps. 91:13; Rom. 16:20,

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18. An Unbelieving and Rebellious People.

Numbers 14:1-12. What in any other nation would have been described as a panic of fear, was, in the case of Israel, a panic of unbelief, which deserved the reproachful expostulation of Jehovah in v. 11. The transition is easy from unbelief to open rebellion against God, as expressed in the words, "Let us make a captain, and let us return into Egypt." The connection between the fearful and unbelieving is very close, Rev. 21:8. On the other hand, we have the exhortation of 2 Pet. 1:5 (A. V.), "Add to your faith virtue (or courage)," as exemplified in the language of Joshua and Caleb. But their words of faith and encouragement only elicited hatred and murder.

Compare v. 10 with Gen. 4:4 and Heb. 11:4. God's two stalwart witnesses did not minimize the strength or the numbers of the foe, but magnified the mighty power pledged to fulfill the ancient covenant with Abraham: "The Lord is with us; fear them not." He cannot fail the trustful soul!

19. Pardon by Moses' Intercession.

Numbers 14:13-25. Moses was free from selfish ambition. His one thought was for the glory of God. When for a moment the suggestion presented itself to his mind that his own seed should take the place of this rebellious race he instantly dismissed it. It was not to be entertained for a moment, lest the Egyptians make capital of it. He had no desire to be the ancestor of a great nation, if it would tarnish the divine honor. He would rather be consigned to oblivion himself than that one jewel in the glorious galaxy of God's glory should be bedimmed.

There were three arguments in his intercession: God's reputation, God's consistency with himself and God's mercy. Methinks I hear the voice of the Supreme Mediator behind these pleadings! His prayer was heard, but the generation that believed not could not enter the

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land. You may escape Egypt and yet miss Canaan. See Heb. 3:12-19.

20. The Penalty of Unbelief and Rashness.

Numbers 14:26-45. The old translation in verse 34 was unfortunate. "Breach of promise" is rendered in R. V. "my alienation." It is still better to notice the marginal reading, "the revoking of my promise." But even this hardly gives us the true meaning of the words, which teach us that God's promises are conditional on our faith. He cannot do what we fail to trust him to do.

The key of faith will unlock every drawer and cupboard in the divine treasury, but we must use it. If we will not trust God with our life we shall be left to perish in the wilderness of drought, of restlessness and of peril. Unbelief paralyzes God's arm. See Matt. 13:58. And let us learn from the closing paragraph that the might of our own right hand will never avail to accomplish what is forfeited by unbelief. "It shall not prosper."

21. Exemplary Punishment for Sabbath-breaking.

Numbers 15:27-41. This chapter resembles a sweet flute-like melody inserted between two fierce strains. It reminds us that in the midst of wrath God remembers mercy. . The stranger—whether pilgrim, emigrant or slave—was to be included in burnt-offerings and sacrifices; a prevision of the time when all holy souls shall be reckoned in the household of God, Eph. 2:19.

Sins of ignorance may be forgiven, vs. 22-29. They are *sins*. *Debts* of shortcoming need pardon equally as do *trespasses*. But, as Paul teaches us, we may confidently count on forgiveness for evil things done unwittingly. See 1 Tim. 1:12-14; Heb. 5:2. It is quite otherwise with *sins of presumption*, vs. 30-36. If persisted in, these induce death. See 1 John 5:16.

We have something better than the memorial fringe, in the ministry of the Holy Spirit, John 14:26.

22. The Rebellion of Korah.

Numbers 16:1-19. This was a very serious revolt, because so many princes associated themselves with the Levites. Jealousy was at the root of the entire movement. "All the congregation are holy," they said. "Wherefore lift ye up yourselves?" There is no root of bitterness that needs such careful watching as jealousy! If it is in your heart you must, like Samuel of old and General Gordon in our own times, "hew Agag in pieces before the Lord."

The record of Moses' meekness precedes this story of his testing. Whatever is strongest and best in us will be searched as by fire. Even Moses was ruffled by these gross charges. See v. 15. The best of men are but men at the best. Only Jesus was without a flaw.

What a beautiful thought is expressed in vs. 5, 7, 9. There are holy and blessed souls who have an especial right of access into God's presence-chamber. See Zech. 3:7.

23. Divine Judgment Upon the Rebels.

Numbers 16:20-35. It was wise of Moses not to attempt to vindicate himself, but to leave God to maintain his cause. He is not slow to undertake the vindication of those who entrust their reputation with him. To take the sword is to perish by the sword. "Wait on the Lord and keep his way, and he will exalt thee to inherit the land."

The doom of Korah and his fellow-conspirators was very terrible; but if they had been spared, the whole camp would have been infected, and God's purposes frustrated. Those who suffer from the bubonic plague must be instantly separated from their fellows, for the sake of society! Remember, as Jude says, that the pit still devours, v. 11. In these last days of the present age, and in view of the terrible records of this chapter, we may well ponder the summons of Rev. 18:4. The congregation was spared, because of the divine compassion of which Moses had a true conception. His prayer only reflected the divine thought, v. 22.

24. "Between the Dead and the Living."

Numbers 16:36-50. The censers served as plates for the altar. Even evil men and evil things will be made to subserve the divine purposes. See Acts 2:23. What a wonderful anticipation of our Lord's eternal priesthood and intercession is furnished by this picture of Aaron waving his censer between the living and the dead, and arresting the plague! On which side do you stand? Are you among the living, or among the dead? Is Christ to you a savor of life unto life or of death unto death? Awake thou that sleepest and arise from the dead, and Christ shall enlighten thee.

The priesthood and the incense-offering had been usurped by Korah to his destruction; but as exercised by God's appointed priest, they brought life. It is an awful thing for mortal man to intrude into the sacred prerogatives of Christ. See 1 Tim. 2:5.

25. The Budding of Aaron's Rod.

Numbers 17:1-13. The controversy about the priesthood needed authoritative settlement, and to remove all grounds of dissension a notable sign was wrought on Aaron's rod. "The man whom I shall choose, *his* rod shall bud." This is an eternal principle. There is an indissoluble connection between God's choice and our fruitfulness. "I have chosen you and ordained you," said our Lord, "that ye should go and bring forth fruit."

In the Epistle to the Hebrews we learn that Aaron's budding rod symbolized our Lord's unwithering priesthood. See Heb. 7:24. He seemed as a root out of the dry ground; but in the grave the rod of Jesse began to bud and blossom and bear fruit. We may seem to be mere bare rods, but if we become united to Christ by a living faith we shall partake of his strength and beauty. "A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven." "From me is thy fruit found," Hos. 14:8.

26. Give God the Best.

Numbers 18:21-32. The inner service of the Tabernacle was assigned to the priests, who must be of the house of Aaron. The Levites were joined to the house of Aaron for the more menial service. In the earlier portion of this chapter, vs. 5-20, the maintenance of the priests is provided for; and in this part, vs. 21-32, the maintenance of the Levites. A tithe of the heavenly offerings of Israel was assigned to them. It had been Levi's doom to be scattered in Israel, Gen. 49:7. But the curse was transmuted to blessing. They were summoned to perform the priestly office of the first-born, and God was not unmindful to reward them for their arduous labors. He himself became their inheritance.

But though the Levite's sustenance was assured from the gifts of Israel, he was not absolved from the privilege and duty of contributing to the service of God. He, too, must offer a tithe for the support of the priests. "We are members one of another."

27. Purification for Uncleaness.

Numbers 19:1-22. We might have expected this chapter to occur in Leviticus. Is it not incongruous in this narrative of the pilgrimage? Nay; this is the most appropriate place, since in the desert march we are more exposed to the touch of defilement, such as needs daily cleansing, lest we be shut out from fellowship with God.

The ashes of an heifer are emblematic of the work of our Lord. See Heb. 9:13. No blemish; never a yoke; "slain without the camp," counted an unclean thing! It was easy for the Jew to contract ceremonial defilement. To walk over a grave was enough. But the ashes of the heifer mingled with spring—or running—water restored the polluted soul to the family and the Tabernacle. So as we confess our sins, we are sprinkled from an evil conscience, we are restored to unity with God and his people, and we walk in newness of life.

(For Review Questions on Sections 1-27 see page 166.)

28. The Sin of Moses and Aaron.

Numbers 20:1-13. Again the people, as the long years of their Wilderness life drew to an end, gathered around the Tabernacle at Kadesh. Again the murmuring spirit broke out, as it had done forty years before. To the end we shall be liable to the outbreak of the old sins; and can never relax our vigilance or sheathe the sword.

Moses was to *speak* to the rock, not smite it. See Exod. 17:6. The Rock of Ages was smitten only once. "It is appointed unto men *once* to die," and "Christ was *once* offered to bear the sins of many." It is now only needful for the soul to *speak* to him, though in the lowest and most faltering accents, to elicit streams of help and salvation.

It was lack of faith that led Moses to smite the rock twice. Speaking seemed too slight an effort for the production of such a marvel! He forgot that neither rod nor speech effected the result, but the power of God that wrought through and with him. See 1 Cor. 3:4. "She only touched the hem of his garment!" Matt. 9:20.

29. Edom Refuses Passage; Aaron Dies.

Numbers 20:14-28. It was an ungracious act on the part of the Edomites—descendants of Esau, Jacob's brother—to forbid the passage of the chosen people through their territory; and it was never forgotten. It is referred to again and again in the strongest terms by prophet and psalmist. See Deut. 2:4, 8; 23:7; Amos 1:11; Obad. 10, 12; Ps. 137:7.

Aaron's death was arranged so as to give him a distant glimpse of the Land which had so long beckoned him onward. But he was not suffered to continue. His death is quoted in evidence of the imperfection of the Aaronic priesthood, in contrast to the indissoluble priesthood of our Lord, Heb. 7:16.

This is a sad chapter! Moses' failure, Aaron's and Miriam's death, Edom's refusal! But God's purpose

moved steadily on. He wrought for his own sake, because of the Covenant.

30. The Brazen Serpent; Journeying to Pisgah.

Numbers 21:1-20. It often falls to our lot to compass the land of Edom! It is bad enough to have to fight the desert tribes, but it is harder to traverse the long circuitous route, which a little kindness on our brother's part might have rendered needless. What discouragement, heart-break and fainting we cause one another!

The story of the brazen serpent was quoted by our Lord to Nicodemus, John 3:14. It exemplifies the law that like cures like. Our Lord came in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, and as such was nailed to the tree, that the progress of sin and death might be arrested. Whosoever directs to him the look of faith shall have everlasting life.

Near the pole-foot sprang up the brook, vs. 17, 18. We are reminded of the connection between the Cross and Pentecost. Spring up, O well of the Holy Spirit, in our hearts, and churches, and schools! The living water is within; summon it!

31. Victory Over the Amorites.

Numbers 21:21-35. Two great victories opened the eastern lands to the possession and settlement of two tribes and a half. It is not enough to know our heritage in Christ; we must possess our possessions.

Sihon, the king of the Amorites, made an unprovoked attack on Israel; and his action was the less excusable, because he had himself been an invader. As a proof of this, a passage is quoted from one of their national songs, in which the poet describes his invasion of the land, the burning of Heshbon and Ar, and the erection of new cities in their stead, vs. 27-30. See also Judges 11:13-27. Sihon and Og suffered the same fate at the hands of Israel. General Gordon, when crossing the Soudan to attack the slave-trader, often heard these

words in his heart: "Fear him not, for I have delivered him into thy hand." See Ps. 135:11; 136:19, 20. Behind all history is divine and everlasting love!

32. Baalam Sent for, to Curse Israel.

Numbers 22:1-20. These chapters present a surprising contrast between the covetous prophet and his sublime prophecies. It is clearly possible to be the mouthpiece of truth and yet have neither part nor lot in it.

Balak, as had been predicted, was sore afraid. Compare v. 3 with Exod. 15:15. The elders of Midian were his friends and allies. It was very important for them to stand together. The journey across the desert to Mesopotamia, where Balaam lived, was long and tedious, but he was a famous magician, who could marshal unseen forces into the battle by his incantations. He knew the only true God, but loved the wages of unrighteousness and erred for reward. See 2 Pet. 2:14-16; Jude 11.

He made up his mind to win Balak's promised gifts, and sought to persuade God to become his accomplice, first, by letting him go, and, secondly, by letting him say what Balak wished said. But God demands our loyalty and unison with him, and will not swerve from the path of truth and righteousness by a hair's-breadth to help our desires and ambitions.

33. Balaam Warned What to Speak.

Numbers 22:21-40. If only Balaam had abided by his first answer to Balak's request, he would have been saved from the disgrace and suffering which ensued. But he seemed to think that it was possible to alter God's mind; hence his request to the second company of messengers that they give him time to ascertain God's will. Already that will had been clearly made known to him; what object had he in pressing for a further response?

When, finally, he was told that he might go, he rose up in the morning, saddled his ass, and started post-

haste. He was trying to serve two masters—to speak as God bade him, but to please Balak and pocket his gold.

How many agencies God uses to arrest our evil courses! Peter specially refers to this incident, 2 Peter 2:16. Many cries are raised to stop the boat that is caught in the rapids above Niagara! Thus the way of transgressors is made hard by the love of God!

34. A Blessing Instead of a Curse.

Numbers 22:41—23:12. Notice the position of these chapters, preceding the awful story of Baal-peor. Presently the Israelites will be perpetrating such terrible sins that it might seem impossible for God to continue to acknowledge them; yet here God stands for them and restrains the spirit of evil. He will take their chastisement, when needed, into his own hands.

With all his might Balaam strove to earn the royal gifts. Ah, thought he, that I could really feel that I was the organ of the divine malediction! But he could not feel in his heart that God's spirit was urging him in the direction that Balak wished. The stream of destiny was not running that way. On the contrary, he could forge no weapon against Israel that could prosper, and when he tried to raise his tongue in judgment against the people of God he was condemned. It was as if God said, "Touch not mine anointed." Ps. 105:15; Isa. 54:17; Rom. 8:31.

35. No Enchantment Against Israel.

Numbers 23:13—30. Balak was surprised and disappointed. He therefore bethought himself of limiting the seer's vision, so that he might see an attenuated Israel from a height that commanded only a partial view of the camp. How often we try to see only what we want to see! How often we shut our eyes to a rival's real merits! Instead of entering into God's great thoughts we shut ourselves up in a tiny limited world. We will not acknowledge what our pride does not want

to acknowledge. We are like children building sand-castles against the tide. You had better bring your mind to harmonize with God's facts than minimize or evade their truth. You are hurting yourself, but can never alter them. Take God's way and be at peace!

Let us ponder verse 21—it is as we are in God's purpose; and verse 23—when faced by our enemies; and verse 24—when most convinced of our helplessness.

36. Balaam's Vision of Israel's Prosperity.

Numbers 24:1-14. In these remarkable words Balaam describes the condition and prospects of God's people. They reveal the innermost thought which even a bad, double-dealing man has of the saint. Balaam had his times of illumination, when he touched the very truth of things. A man may know and speak truth, which he does not himself obey. Would that we all realized the high ideals which sinful men have of religion!

We are intended to be as gardens by the river, lign-aloes planted by the Lord, and cedars fed by perennial streams. Oh, for more of exalted royalty of soul, the invincible strength, the victory that eats up the adversary, and actually feeds on what threatens to destroy! We can only attain to such an ideal by a close union with the risen Saviour. Let us live on the plane which is ours in him and for which he imparts the Holy Spirit!

37. The "Star out of Jacob."

Numbers 24:15-25. When your heart is dismayed because of the hatred and opposition of Satan, the great accuser, turn to this chapter. If he stands up to resist, the Son of God stands in your defence. The Eternal God is on your side, not because you are perfect, but because you have linked your little life with Jesus Christ in his glory and beauty. In Deut. 23:5 we learn the blessed secret that explained Balaam's failure.

Balaam describes in glowing anticipation Israel's future, and his forecast is marvelously accurate. It is

clear that a man may speak the truth of which his soul is destitute, as a marble fountain may dispense water which it does not taste.

Balaam started for his home, but never reached it. You may long to die the death of the righteous, but it is a vain dream unless you live their life. Compare Num. 23:10 with 31:8.

38. The Zeal of Phinehas Against Impurity.

Numbers 25:1-18. Unable to curse Israel directly, Balaam suggested to Balak the device of destroying the union between Israel and their divine Protector by enticing them into sin. Once bring license and passion into play, and let the seductions of evil prevail, and surely the holiness of God would compel him to withdraw his protection! This was a diabolical suggestion to gain his wage. See Rev. 2:14.

The women of the land, notorious for their wantonness, seduced the men of Israel to join in the sensual rites of their worship. All did not fall into this sin. See Deut. 4:3, 4. But it brought terrible chastisement on the offenders, 1 Cor. 10:8. You must amputate a gangrened limb.

For Phinehas, see Mal. 2:4, etc. Let us come out of the world, cleansing ourselves from its filthiness! 2 Cor. 6:14, etc. There are crises when love for God's honor demands strenuous action, which never fails, as in the case of Phinehas, of an abounding recognition, v. 12.

39. The Census of the Nation.

Numbers 26:1-4, 51-65. The terrible visitation of the preceding chapter swept away the survivors of the old generation. See Ps. 95:11. This new census was very important, partly as showing the numbers to which Israel had grown, and partly as fixing families and clans, preparatory to their entrance into Canaan.

The census of the Levites was taken separately, and conducted on different principles. It showed an increase of 1000 since the numbering, forty years before,



Balaam Prophesying the Star of Jacob. Num. 24 : 12-17.
From Painting by Hippolyte Flanckin. Modern French Artiste.

3:39. That this was no greater was probably due to Korah's rebellion.

God is ever writing up his people. Can we claim to be included in the divine enumeration and enrolled in the Lamb's book of life? Compare Ps. 87:5, 6; Rev. 3:5. We are born to a great inheritance, but must claim it by faith.

40. Joshua Appointed Moses' Successor.

Numbers 27:1-23. Up to the last Moses was faithful as a servant to him that had appointed him in all his house, Heb. 3:2. Notice that he did not attempt to legislate for these young girls, who pleaded for a possession in their father's right; but he brought their case before God. It was ever "as the Lord commanded Moses," vs. 11 and 22. And when he was bidden to ascend the mountain and die his main anxiety was to secure a successor to shepherd the people. Notice that expressive phrase, "the God of the spirits of all flesh!" See Heb. 12:9.

The great Lawgiver may bring the people to the borders of the land of rest, but there he must resign his charge. The law, with its demands for an obedience which we cannot give, cannot bring the soul to rest. That is the prerogative of Joshua—Jesus, Heb. 4:8.

41. The Destruction of the Midianites.

Numbers 31:1-20. In reading such a chapter as this we must remember that the Bible is the history of the slow advance of a nation toward the knowledge of God, and its preparation to become one of the greatest of spiritual forces. That process could only be a prolonged one. Only by slow degrees could the grossness of the period be eliminated. Our Lord distinctly said that certain things were allowed for a time because of the hardness of their hearts. See Matt. 19:8. Many times he made the clear distinction between what "they of old" had said and what he said. See Matt. 5:21, 27,

33, 38, 43. The *highest* law for dealing with our enemies is found in his teachings.

The first steps of purification had to do with the women who might introduce heathen vices into Israelite homes, and the leisurely dealing with spoils and captives, so that passion might have time to cool.

42. The Disposition of the Spoils of War.

Numbers 31:21-54. This law, which subjected the victors to a whole week of separation and to special purification, instead of an immediate welcome into the camp, was intended to wean the Hebrews from the practice of war, giving them a higher standard than that of surrounding nations. Thus God educates us, by placing before us an ever higher standard, as we are able to obey it. It is easy to say hard things against this treatment of Midian, but extermination is sometimes the only way to safety.

For us the lesson is one of rigid separation. Some may be able to stand God's searching fire; but others cannot bear that flame. Yet these may not go altogether free. See v. 23. As strangers and pilgrims we must abstain from fleshly lusts. God demands our holiness, but discriminates in the method of producing it.

43. Seeking Inheritance Beyond Jordan.

Numbers 32:1-19. Reuben and Gad were contiguous to each other when the host encamped. They had, therefore, many opportunities for conference, and finally united in asking permission to settle on the east of Jordan, where vast tracks of pasturage were eminently suited to their flocks. They have been held up as types of those whose "much cattle" hinder the realization to the full of the heavenly inheritance. Certainly many professing Christians live on the world's side of the Cross. They have no desire to share in the crucifixion of the self-life, if only they may build sheepcotes and cities and provide for their little ones. "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than . . ."

At first Moses was indignant at the request, thinking that they desired to evade the hardships, but their explanation modified his wrath. Be swift to hear, slow to speak!

44. Warning Against Forsaking Their Brethren.

Numbers 32:20-42. These two and a half tribes never entered the national life, as did those on the other side of Jordan. They were far from the center of religious life, first at Shiloh and then at Jerusalem. On them first the tide of invasion broke, sweeping them and their cattle into captivity.

In Deborah's great song Reuben is rebuked for sitting "among the sheepfolds to hear the pipings for the flocks," instead of coming to the help of the Lord against the mighty. The Brahmins say that the holy man dies to every other sin earlier and easier than to the love of money. Their cattle kept these tribes on the wrong side of the river of separation! Let us beware of the cares of this world, if we are poor, and of the deceitfulness of riches, if we are rich. Better lose all than the soul. See Matt. 16:26.

45. The Itinerary of the Wanderings.

Numbers 33:1-37. This record of ineffectual marches is full of pathetic interest and warning. If these halting-places had been in the straight line of march for the Land of Promise there had been little room for regret. But they were not. They recall journeys that need never to have been taken. The tribes crossed and re-crossed the desert, marking time whilst the bodies of the murmurers fell in the Wilderness and were wrapt about with the desert sands.

Such is the doom of unbelief. To effect nothing, to miss the rest of God, and to perish on the threshold of achievement—such is the experience of the soul described in James 1:6. God has given us in Christ the promise of rest, victory and satisfaction; let us enter upon our inheritance!

46. No Compromise with Idolatry.

Numbers 33:38-56. Aaron's death must have been deeply felt by his brother Moses. During the great crisis of Hebrew history they had been so closely associated that the wrench must have been very considerable. In addition, there was the recollection of the sin which had excluded the two brothers from Canaan. In the Epistle to the Hebrews the death of Aaron is recorded to set forth the eternal priesthood of Christ, 7:17. Our High Priest has no successor; his office cannot be passed to another. It is not after Aaron, but Melchizedek.

The last paragraph, vs. 50-56, is specially impressive. There must be no complicity with evil; for if there be, it will eat out the very heart of our character and happiness. It is much better to root out evil with a strong hand than to suffer it in any form, for, like the boomerang of the savage, our sinful permissions will come back on ourselves.

47. The Borders of the Promised Land.

Numbers 34:1-18. Here are set out the borders of the Promised Land, which were never fully reached in the days of Israel's occupation, except perhaps for one brief period in Solomon's glorious reign. God's ideal for his people far exceeded their realization of it. But is it not always so! Does not his peace pass understanding? Is not his joy unspeakable and full of glory? Does not the love of Christ pass knowledge? Jesus Christ is our inheritance; let us possess our possessions. Let us follow on to know the Lord; and remember that there is an allotted space for each of us in Christ, to which no other soul has a right.

It is a great honor to be chosen to divide the lots. Year by year we ought to set forth the believer's rights in Christ, that a divine discontent may urge to higher heights and deeper experiences.

48. The Cities of Refuge for the Manslayer.

Numbers 35:1-15. This chapter is full of provision for the Levites, the chosen ministers of God's house. They who serve there may be at rest about their maintenance. He is not unrighteous to forget their labor of love.

These forty-eight cities must have been centers of religious influence throughout the land. As cities set on a hill that could not be hid, as salt staying corruption, as lights along a rock-bound coast—so must they have stood in the Holy Land. So should our homes be in our land.

Six of the Levite cities were set apart for those who were guilty of manslaughter—*i. e.*, those who had killed some one unwittingly. They were within easy access from all parts of the land, and offered sanctuary until a judicial inquiry could be held. In Jesus we find refuge, Heb. 6:18. No avenger following the track of past sin can hurt the soul that shelters in him. Only we must never venture beyond the precincts of his salvation.

49. The Penalty for the Murderer.

Numbers 35:16-34. For murder the penalty was death, vs. 30, 31; but for accidental homicide there was freedom within the city limits until the death of the high priest, when all these refugees might return to their homes with impunity. The institution of the blood-avenger was almost a necessity in those lands of scattered population and without communal organization. Here, without destroying the practice, it has been placed under careful limitations. We are our brethren's keepers, and instead of passing on a slander, we should stand for them against those who have wrongfully maligned them.

What an exquisite promise is contained in verse 34! To think that Jehovah actually dwelt in the Holy Land! He dwells also in each assembly of his saints and in our hearts. See Ezekiel 48:35; Matt. 18:20; 2 Cor. 6:16; Rev. 21:3.

(For Review Questions on Sections 28-49 see page 167.)

REVIEW QUESTIONS ON NUMBERS

OUTLINE.

- (a) What are the three main divisions of the book, according to the localities where its events occurred?
- (b) What happened while the Israelites were still in camp at Sinai?
- (c) What principal occurrences marked the long period between leaving Sinai and reaching camp by the Jordan?
- (d) What happened while they remained encamped in the plains of Moab?

INTRODUCTION.

- (e) How does the book get its name?
- (f) What word well describes its contents?

SECTIONS 1-27. CHAPTERS 1-19.

(Each question applies to the paragraph of corresponding number in the Comments.)

- 1. How did this census differ from those we take now? Why was the tribe of Levi not included?
- 2. Who took the place of the first-born? How were the surplus ones redeemed?
- 3. Who were Nazirites and what did their vow include?
- 4. Repeat the priestly blessing.
- 5. How did the princes show their generosity?
- 6. How were the Levites set apart to represent the people?
- 7. What years from the prime of life did the Levites give to their service of worship?
- 8. Who were entitled to take part in the Passover?
- 9. How were the people directed by the cloud?
- 10. What were the uses of the silver trumpets?
- 11. What invitation did Moses give to Hobab?
- 12. Why did the flesh-lovers complain and what effect did this have upon Moses?
- 13. Who were appointed to aid Moses and how were they fitted to serve?

14. How was the demand for flesh satisfied? how punished?
15. How did God protect Moses against criticism from his own relatives?
16. For what purpose were the spies sent out?
17. What two reports did these spies bring back?
18. What effect did these reports have upon the people?
19. What did Moses plead in order to save the people from destruction?
20. What penalty did they have to suffer for their unbelief? and what for their presumption?
21. Why was the Sabbath-breaker cut off from among the people?
22. What was the cause of Korah's rebellion? What made this defection serious?
23. Why was it so severely punished?
24. How was the plague which followed this rebellion arrested?
25. How was God's choice of Aaron's line for the priesthood shown beyond dispute?
26. What provision was made for the support of the Levites?
27. How was uncleanness to be removed?

SECTIONS 28-49. CHAPTERS 20-35.

(Each question applies to the paragraph of corresponding number in the Comments.)

28. How did Moses sin in smiting the rock?
29. Why did the Edomites refuse passage to Israel? How did Aaron's life-work end?
30. Why was the brazen serpent needed and what was accomplished through it?
31. What two great victories did the people win east of the Jordan?
32. To whom did the king of Moab resort and for what purpose?
33. How did God impress upon Balaam that he must utter only what God bade him?
34. How did the man who was sent for to curse the Israelites bless them instead?
35. How did Balak try a second time to get Israel cursed? With what result?
36. What did Balaam's third prophecy declare about Israel's future?
37. What did he declare about the "star out of Jacob?"

38. How did Israel again break out into sin and how was it checked?
 39. Why was a second census taken before entering Canaan?
 40. How was the great Lawgiver's successor appointed?
 41. What bloody work was wrought upon the Midianites, and why was it necessary?
 42. How were the people taught not to make the spoils of war their personal booty?
 43. Why did Reuben and Gad ask for their inheritance east of the Jordan, and why did Moses oppose it?
 44. What provision was made that they should do their share in conquering Canaan?
 45. What great lesson should be learned from the list of Israel's camping-places?
 46. Why were the Canaanites to be completely driven out of the Promised Land?
 47. Why, as in Israel's case, are our possibilities broader than our possessions?
 48. Why were the Levites scattered throughout the other tribes? What was the purpose of the Cities of Refuge?
 49. How might the unintentional manslayer escape the penalty of the murderer?
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V

THE BOOK OF DEUTERONOMY

OUTLINE OF DEUTERONOMY

THE LAW REPEATED FOR THE NEW GENERATION

- I. FIRST DISCOURSE OF MOSES1—4.
 1. *Review of Israel's History from Sinai to the Jordan*1—3.
 2. *Appeal to the People to Faithfully Observe God's Commands*4:1—40.
 3. *Supplementary Historical Statement*.4:41—49.
- II. MOSES' SECOND DISCOURSE5—28.
 1. *Repetition of the Decalogue and Exhortation to Cleave unto God*5—11.
 2. *Laws Regulating the Religious and Social Life of the People*12—26.
 3. *The Law to be Written on Plastered Stones; the Cursings and the Blessings*27:1—28:6.
 4. *Consequences that Will Follow Obedience and Disobedience*28:7—68.
- III. THE THIRD DISCOURSE29, 30.

The Covenant Renewed and Enforced with Promises and Threatenings
- IV. THE FINAL SCENES IN MOSES' CAREER..31—34.
 1. *Joshua Charged and Commissioned*..31:1—23.
 2. *The Book of the Law Delivered to the Priests*31:24—29.
 3. *The Song of Moses and Directions to Ascend Nebo*32.
 4. *Moses' Final Blessing*33.
 5. *The Death of Moses*34.

THE BOOK OF DEUTERONOMY

This is again the Greek name for this book, and signifies the "second giving of the Law." It contains the records of public addresses to Israel, delivered in the eleventh month of the fortieth year of their wanderings through the Wilderness. As Moses uttered them on the eve of his own speedy removal, he was able to speak with unusual emphasis and urgency. The allusions to the natural features amidst which these addresses were given are consistent with the place and speaker. It has been shown also by competent scholarship that Deuteronomy has all the peculiarities of Moses' style; and any differences of hortatory entreaty and appeal may be accounted for by the mellowing effect of age.

The special references to this book in the New Testament are very significant. Our Lord quoted from it thrice in his Temptation, Matt. 4:4, 7, 10. See also Rom. 10:19; Acts 3:22; 7:37. There are touches by a later writer, and an appendix, chapter 34; but the origin of the treatise as a whole must be ascribed to the great Lawgiver.

THE BOOK OF DEUTERONOMY

1. Moses Recalls the Start from Horeb.

Deuteronomy 1:1-18. To this new generation Moses spake the holy law of God, since they had not heard it at Sinai. In view of the great Lawgiver's approaching decease, it was necessary to re-edit it. The name of this book means *the second giving of the Law*.

The *Red Sea* in v. 1, A. V., must be replaced by *Suph*, R. V. Evidently it was somewhere in the neighborhood of Pisgah. It is meet for us on a birthday, or some such anniversary, to review the way that the Lord our God has conducted us. He is the God of our fathers, and of the Covenant. Before us is set the land of our inheritance. God calls us to go in and possess it. He hath "blessed us with all spiritual blessings . . . in Christ," but we must appropriate and possess by faith. And the faith that claims depends on the obedience that conforms to the divine Law, Eph. 1:3; 2 Peter 1:3.

2. The Penalty of Unbelief.

Deuteronomy 1:19-40. There is little to distinguish Kadesh-barnea among the sand-dunes of the desert. It was situated on the frontier, where Canaan fades into the southern desert. But it is a notable place in the spiritual chart, and few are they that have not passed through some notable experience there. It was there that Israel thought more of their enemies and difficulties than of the right hand of the Most High. When we look at circumstances apart from God; when we account our temptations and inbred corruptions too masterful to be subdued; when giants bulk bigger than the ascended Christ, we also turn back from the Rest of

God to the barren wanderings of the waste. God allows these difficulties as a foil to his power and grace and to train us to high attainments.

3. Journeying and Dying in the Wilderness.

Deuteronomy 1:41—2:15. We cannot obtain by our impetuosity and insistence what God offers only as a free gift to our faith. The Land of Promise is not to be obtained by strength of hand, but by the soul that lives in the will of God. Even when we are rebellious and unbelieving, God does not forget nor forsake us, 2:7. He knows our walking through the great wilderness which we have chosen. Through all the forty years he goes with his people as their fellow-pilgrim. Even under such circumstances they lack nothing that is necessary to a complete and blessed life.

Edom was not to be injured, because of the ancient grant, Gen. 32:3. So with Moab. The gifts and calling of God are without repentance. He will remember his Abrahams and his Lots long after they have passed from this mortal sphere, and will care for their children and children's children. See Isa. 59:21.

4. Conquering Beyond Jordan.

Deuteronomy 2:16—37. In the earlier verses of this portion we catch a glimpse of the former history of Palestine, with the wars of conquest and changes of tenure that swept over it. The Almighty Governor of the world was, as the Apostle Paul said afterward, determining seasons and frontiers. Nations enervated by their sins are continually being judged by the Prince of the kings of the earth. See Lev. 18:28; Acts 17:26, 27; Rev. 1:5; Matt. 25:32.

A pacific and fair offer, in all good faith, was made to Sihon, which he refused to accept. The heart which is already hardened by sin becomes harder with every fresh rejection of God's love. In that sense we understand how the Lord hardened his heart. No ice is so hard as that which freezes at night after a day of thaw.

The sun that melts wax, hardens clay; but the fault is not with the sun, but with the clay.

5. The Inheritance of Reuben, Gad and Manasseh.

Deuteronomy 3:1-22. Sihon's defeat, described in the previous chapter, compelled his ally Og to take the field and oppose the further advance of Israel. "*He came out*" against them. Perhaps also Josh. 24:12 affords a clue. Swarms of hornets harassed him and his people, and drove them out of their stone houses and fortifications; they preferred meeting the chosen race in the open to the scourge of these formidable creatures. When God says, "Fear not," he fights on our side.

Recent discoveries confirm these references to the many stone cities of Bashan, mentioned in verse 4. The country is covered with ruins. Porter says that 500 ruined places attest the might of the Amorites. The royal bedstead is thought to mean coffin or bier. Its length of 13½ feet would infer a stature of 11 or 12 feet.

These victories opened fertile and beautiful pasturelands, including Hermon and Gilead. "The Lord delivered" . . . "and we took."

6. "Take Heed to Thyself."

Deuteronomy 3:23-4:14. Strong faith was required by the two and a half tribes to leave their wives and children whilst they went to succor their brethren. But God's commands and assurances foreclosed all arguments. Whenever we are summoned to special service, we may consign the care of our personal interests to God. Seek first the kingdom, and all other things will be added.

Notice that Moses referred to the wondrous acts of the Exodus as only the *beginning* of God's wondrous works, 3:24. Probably in the countless ages of eternity we shall always feel that we are witnessing only the *beginning* of God's self-revelation.

Moses, like Paul afterward, tried to reverse the di-

vine decision. Compare 3:23-25 and 2 Cor. 12:8, 9. Do not pray against God's will, but with it, 1 John 5:14. When God says No, there are always tender compensations, such as this Pisgah-vision.

Israel's tenure of Canaan depended on obedience to God's will, in *statutes*, including the ordinances of religion, and in *judgments* relating to civil matters.

7. Jehovah "a Jealous God."

Deuteronomy 4:15-31. How often Moses repeats, "*take heed.*" We must watch as well as pray and keep our souls diligently. We must specially beware of idols—that is, any visible thing which takes the place of the unseen and eternal, veiling it from our view. The soul must learn to lean on the everlasting arm.

How true that description of the iron furnace! The metaphor is derived from the process of smelting metal. We have had our Egypts, where by trials the real ore of character was disintegrated from its rocky matrix. But though God may remove us from outward affliction, he is himself the furnace of purification, by his Spirit and Word, and in the secrets of our hearts, v. 24. But his fire burns our bonds, whilst our heads are unsinged, Daniel 3:25.

If these words meet the eyes of any who are among the scattered and vanished ones, let them seek God again, and they shall certainly find him; for he is merciful, he will not fail nor destroy, nor forget the olden Covenant, vs. 30, 31.

8. Israel's Peculiar Privileges.

Deuteronomy 4:32-49. Every argument that love and wisdom, the great past and the miracles of the Exodus could suggest, was brought to bear on the hearts of the chosen people, fortifying them against the temptations to backsliding. They were bidden to ask from ancient history and from one end of heaven to another, if any such wonders had ever been known in the history of the nations. But it must be sorrowfully con-

fessed that memory and wonder are not enough to permanently fortify the heart against the insidious entrance of evil. Only the Holy Spirit can do that, Rom. 8:1-4; Gal. 5:16.

So eager is the divine heart that none should perish but that all should come to repentance, that guide-posts to refuge are carefully multiplied. Here again their names and locations are specified, lest any should not have met with former notifications, Num. 35:6, 14; 2 Peter 3:9.

9. The Decalogue Repeated.

Deuteronomy 5:1-21. The Law of God is for "all Israel." None are exempt. "Not with our fathers" means not with them *only*; Moses also uses the expression because many of the references of the Decalogue were to the settled life of Canaan. "Face to face," not in dark visions, but clearly and lucidly, Job 4:12, 13. Our "face-to-face" vision is yet to come, 1 Cor. 13:12; Rev. 22:4. Notice in Deut. 5:5 the ideal mediator, Gal. 3:19; 1 Tim. 2:5.

Every soul has two givings of the Law. First, we stand under Sinai to be judged, condemned, and shut up to Christ as our only hope; then we come to it a second time, asking that the Holy Spirit should write it in our hearts, and make us to walk in obedience to its precepts, Gal. 3:23; Rom. 8:4.

Adolphe Monod, on his death-bed, said: "Sin has two divisions: the evil that we have done and the good that we have left undone. As to the first, there is not a single command that I have not transgressed in letter or spirit; as to the second, it weighs on me even more than the first."

10. Moses Between God and the People.

Deuteronomy 5:22-33. "He added no more"—i. e., the Law is perfect. It is written in stone, and therefore is permanent. When the conscience has not learnt the efficacy of the blood of Jesus it shrinks from contact

with God's holiness, vs. 24-26. But such fear does not save us from going back to our calf-making and license.

Turn from Moses to our blessed Lord, who went into the midst of the thunder and lightning which our sin had incurred. On him the full force of the storm broke, and we were delivered. Adolphe Monod said: "I have a firm and peaceful confidence in the redemption of Jesus Christ, in his blood and sacrifice, accepted before God, taking the place of the good which I have not done and repairing the evil that I have done."

Note the yearning of verse 29. It repeats itself elsewhere, Isa. 48:18; Matt. 23:37. See also Ezekiel 36:26.

11. How to Treat God's Words.

Deuteronomy 6:1-19. Obedience is still the one condition of true prosperity and success. Lands still flow with milk and honey; and they live long who live well. Lives are measured by heart-throbs, and not by figures on the dial.

The fourth verse is reckoned by pious Jews as one of the choicest portions of Scripture. They write it on their phylacteries and repeat it, with other verses, at least twice a day. Note the various methods for maintaining the religious atmosphere: (1) by meditation; (2) by the religious training of children; (3) by pious discourse and conversation; (4) by the persistent study of Scripture. When books are scarce, use wall-texts; but never substitute stray snippets, however sweet, for the whole meal of Scripture.

Let us not forget how many of our present privileges and spiritual advantages must be credited to the prayers and the tears, the labors and the sufferings, of those who have left these precious inheritances to us, their children and heirs! We drink of cisterns we never hewed!

12. No Compromise with Idolatry.

Deuteronomy 6:20-7:11. The great Lawgiver had his eye constantly on the coming generation. It is good

when the children are so arrested by our religious life, that they come to ask us to tell them the reasons that account for it. Seek to live so purely and devoutly, and yet so attractively, that the young people around will be compelled to inquire after your secret, Luke 11:1.

We are not only to teach the children, but to guard them against forming friendships and making marriage alliances with those who might divert them from God. In the New Testament, Christians are forbidden to marry except "in the Lord," and equally stringent are prohibitions against worldly intercourse, 1 Cor. 7:39; 2 Cor. 6:14.

God can break the seven-fold power of sin in the heart of those who are absolutely given over to him and are willing to surrender their evil ways. This is pledged to us by his fidelity and love, 7:8, 9.

13. What the Lord Does for His People.

Deuteronomy 7:12-26. The promises to obedience are enlarged upon with touching copiousness. Love, blessing, keeping, peace, multiplication, fruit and health lie along the narrow pathway entered by the strait gate of the Cross. However forbidding its entrance, it "leadeth unto life." May Christ secure in us this obedience which he, too, demands and achieves by his Spirit! John 14:15.

Whatever be the strength of the Amalekites and Hittites of the heart, let us not fear. We have been "reconciled by his death" and shall be "saved by his life," Rom. 5:10. "Little by little" is the law of progressive sanctification. The Holy Spirit shows us the next portion to be taken and the enemies that resist our prayers. But as we advance, they are driven out, Isa. 54:17.

We resemble what we admire. Let us set our affections above. To abhor the evil and pursue the good casts a glory on our face. Compare verse 26; Psa. 115:8; 2 Cor. 3:18.

14. Beware of Forgetting God.

Deuteronomy 8:1-20. "Thou shalt remember," v. 2; "thou shalt consider," v. 5; "thou shalt bless," v. 10.

The lessons of hunger, vs. 1-9: "Suffered to hunger." "Blessed are they that hunger." "Man doth not live by bread only"; he hungers for knowledge, opportunity, society, love. How many wan faces around us bear witness to the gnawing within. But the Father suffered his Son to fast; and so he deals with us, to prove us. It is only through the discipline of the soul, in learning to go without, that it can be trusted with spiritual opulence and power. See vs. 7-9.

The perils of prosperity, vs. 10-20: It is harder to walk with God in the sunshine of success than in the nipping frosts of failure. When Paul said, "I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound," he put the hardest last. The one secret is to give all the glory to God, and to look always to the Cross, where we were crucified to the pride of the flesh, Phil. 2:7-11; 4:12. "I lay in dust life's glory dead!"

15. Offending the Righteous God.

Deuteronomy 9:1-14. Who can read this chapter without emotion and admiration for its sublime eloquence! It is one of the most striking and moving chapters in this book!

Moses sets himself to convince the people that they must not suppose that their easy entrance to Canaan was due to conspicuous virtue, but rather to God's covenant with their fathers, and also to the sinful practices of the Canaanites. Compare verse 5 with Gen. 15:16. The contagion of these sins might have infected and poisoned humanity; therefore they had to be extirpated. Whatever *we* enjoy is due, not to our merit, but to the infinite grace of God in Jesus Christ, 1 Cor. 15:10.

Ah, my soul, ponder this, for this is true of thee also! All thy past has been filled with failure and rebellion. If thou art still used for God's service, and art credited

with a good name amongst his people, remember the reason is in the sovereign grace of Jehovah!

“A debtor to mercy alone,
Of covenant mercy I sing.”

16. Moses' Intercession for a Rebellious People.

Deuteronomy 9:15-29. During the remainder of this chapter Moses continues to remind the people of their rebellions. It is well, when we are tempted to self-adulation, to listen to that faithful monitor, conscience, recording our evil past. We are apt to forget our many provocations of God, especially when the smart of the rod is over. But we have all had our Horebs, Taberahs, Marahs, Kibroth-hataavahs and Kadesh-barneas, 1 Cor. 10:11.

Again and again would the people have been destroyed, if human justice had decided their case. But Moses, the mediator, knew the holy love of God's heart; and expressed it in his prayers on their behalf. See vs. 18, 20, 25-29. We are reminded of him who ever liveth to make intercession for us within the veil, Heb. 6:20; 7:26, 27; 9:24. Let us imitate Moses in his life of intercessions; and mark well his arguments that we may use them for ourselves and others.

17. What the Lord Requires of Us.

Deuteronomy 10:1-22. The second writing of the Law reminds us of the work wrought in us by the Holy Spirit. When first we hear the Law, we are condemned; but when we have repented and believed, God writes it on the fleshly tablets of our hearts, Heb. 8:10. Together with this deepening love and delight in God's Law, we enter into the spiritual equivalent of Levi's calling, standing to minister, and blessing in God's name.

Every word of the magnificent parable from verse 12 deserves careful pondering. Let us learn what God requires and then ask him to create such things in us. As Augustine puts it: “Give what thou commandest, and then command what thou wilt.” But we must be willing

to enter into the inner significance of the initial Jewish rite, which is also taught in baptism, Rom. 2:26-29; Col. 2:11, 12. The separation of Calvary's Cross leads to the filling of Pentecost!

18. The Rewards of Obedience.

Deuteronomy 11:1-17. In this chapter the introductory portion of this book closes, and two final arguments are brought to bear on the chosen people, to induce them to love God and keep his charge. The one has already been referred to, consisting of those awful judgments with which God had punished the stiff-neckedness of Pharaoh and the rebellions of the Wilderness. We may as well learn sooner than later, that God will have us holy, and if we will not yield to his loving solicitations we must suffer his stern chastisements.

The other argument is derived from the blessings which they would inherit by obedience. In Egypt the irrigation of the land was laboriously effected by the tread-wheels, that raised the water from the Nile-level, but in Canaan there were two annual rainy seasons—the former, September-October; the latter, March-April. The regularity of these seasons depended on Israel's loyal obedience. We are reminded of John 4:14. May we not ask ourselves, which of these typifies our religious life? See Heb. 4:1.

19. The Blessing and the Curse.

Deuteronomy 11:18-32. Never in this world do we reach a position from which it is impossible to fall away. The dew and the rain of God's blessing are contingent on obedience; and one of the strongest incentives to obedience is devout meditation on the Word of God. It is through the letter that we arrive at the spirit; and through the written words at the Eternal Word. We must store up the sacred words of God as a farmer stores up his grain, keeping them before us, making them the familiar topics of home-talk, and exercising ourselves in them. Let us specially ponder

verses 22, 23, 24, 25, appropriating them in a spiritual sense, and claiming their equivalents in the inner life.

All along our lives are Ebals and Gerizims, with their "Come, ye blessed" and "Depart, ye cursed." Always we are arriving at the crossways, on the one of which lies the smile, and on the other the frown, of God. Let us be attracted by the one and dissuaded from the other, till we climb the spiral staircase into the land where there is no cooling love or faltering faith.

20. Cut Out the Plague Spot.

Deuteronomy 13:1-18. How to exterminate sources of disease is a main question with the modern world; but the stamping-out of possible sources of temptation must not less energetically be pursued by each religious soul. The prophet, the beloved associate, the community, that endeavored to turn Israel aside from God, might have no mercy shown. There was no room for those liberal views, in vogue to-day, that smile on the greatest divergencies of belief, if only their advocates are sincere.

For ourselves the lesson is clear enough. We must dissociate ourselves from companionships, however affectionate, which exert a deleterious effect on our characters, and draw us away from God. There is only one alternative—that we should overcome evil with good and lift them to our own ideals. If that be impossible, our course is clear. Our eye must not pity, nor our hand spare. And Jesus left no other alternative. See Mark 9:42, 43.

21. The Prophet Who Was to Come.

Deuteronomy 18:1-22. Those that serve the altar may live by the altar. Let us not forget the needs of those who serve us in holy things. It is a blessed thing when an individual desires "the place that the Lord chooses." Let us be true to the inner prompting, at whatever cost. We shall be fully repaid. When Peter loaned his boat Jesus returned it, filled with fish!

We are to be "perfect with the Lord"—*i. e.*, we are not knowingly to permit things that hurt or grieve his Holy Spirit. If the question should arise, how we are to know God's way, we must take our question to the true Prophet. See Acts 3:22; 7:37. He can answer our hard question; but we are strictly forbidden to go to crystal-gazers, palmists, fortune-tellers, and those who profess to read the future. How serious is their fault who refuse him! Compare verse 19 with Heb. 10:28, 29. Let thy Urim and Thummim be with the Holy One! 1 Sam. 23:11, 12; 30:7, 8.

22. First-Fruits and Tithes.

Deuteronomy 26:1-19. The Israelites were God's tenants-at-will. The entire land and its produce were his; and they were required to acknowledge his ownership by the payment of first-fruits—both at Passover and at Pentecost, Lev. 2:14; Num. 28:26—and of tithes.

All we possess and all we earn are equally the gift of God. Let us acknowledge this by setting apart a fixed proportion of the results of our daily work, whether wages, or crops, or brood, or herd. The words of this ancient collect, with very slight modifications, will suit us well, vs. 5-10. Note the injunction of verse 11. There is not enough joy in our lives or faces. Nothing so quickly commends our religion as the gladness which the world can neither give nor take. To joy let us add intercession, v. 15; and let us never forget to renew our vows of consecration when we bring our gifts, v. 16.

23. Curses Upon Evildoers.

Deuteronomy 27:1-26. Mount Gerizim and Mount Ebal were two masses of limestone rock, reaching 2700 and 2000 feet above the sea-level. Between them lay a beautiful valley, about 300 yards wide. At the foot and on the lower slopes of Gerizim stood the descendants of Rachel and Leah; on those of Ebal, the descendants of Zilpah and Bilhah, together with Zebulun and with Reu-

ben, who had forfeited the rights of the first-born. The priests and the Levites, grouped beside the Ark in the valley, uttered both the benedictions and the solemn denunciations of the Law, each item eliciting the responsive "Amen."

Notice the sensitiveness of the divine Spirit! To make a blind man wander out of his way and to wrest the judgment of the fatherless, was held to be as reprehensible as to commit those terrible breaches of the law of purity. Nothing in life is insignificant or trivial when weighed in the balance of eternal justice. We can only *rejoice* when we realize that we are accepted in the Beloved, and that he has stood for us, Rom. 3:20; 5:1-3, 9.

24. Blessings Upon the Obedient.

Deuteronomy 28:1-19. A remarkable chapter! The epitome of what Israel might have been, contrasted with what she became! It is on account of the transgressions that the centuries have augmented her sum of misery. Oh, that we may never have to lament what we might have been!

These opening verses contain the Beatitudes of the Old Testament. They have their counterparts in the New. Remember that God bends over your life, rejoicing to do you good, and finding pleasure in whatever may enrich your life or flow through it to enrich others. Ask especially that in his great power and grace he shall smite your enemies before you, and establish you unto himself, and open to you his good treasure. If you are in Christ, all things are yours. *Possess your possessions*, 1 Cor. 3:21, 22; Obadiah 17, 19, 20.

25. The Fearful Results of Disobedience.

Deuteronomy 28:20-46. If we compare this chapter with Exodus 23:20-23 and Leviticus 26, we shall see how Moses resumes and amplifies the promises and threatenings already set forth in the earlier editions of

the Law. The blessings are declared in fourteen verses, while the curses require four times as much space. This is due to God's eagerness that men should be warned from courses that injure, and shut up to those that lead to blessedness. Note the language, which rises to the sublimest level, especially in the latter part. The forecasts of the dispersion and the degradation of the Hebrew people are specially remarkable.

It is not only that God goes out of his way to reward the obedient and to punish the ungodly, but these rewards and punishments are part of the nature of things, just as fire stings and burns, when we transgress its laws, but blesses when we obey. If we are at one with God, through Jesus Christ, we are at one with the universe. But if not, "the stars in their courses" fight against us. See Judges 5:20; 1 Cor. 3:21.

26. The Bitter Fruits of Disobeying God.

Deuteronomy 28:47-68. These predictions against the Hebrew people were partially fulfilled in earlier invasions, as for instance, those of Nebuchadnezzar and his generals; but it is to the Roman conquest of Judæa that we must look for complete fulfillment. One only needs to compare these words with the narrative of Josephus to see the exact accomplishment which took place during the wars of Vespasian and Titus. The Jews themselves admit this. Verse 68 was literally fulfilled when Titus transported myriads of Jews to Egypt to be employed in the public works or to fight in the amphitheater.

But if the punishments have been so heavily suffered during these weary centuries, what shall not be the joy when the Lord shall bring back his people to their own land, and all Israel shall be saved! What is this new Euphrates Valley railway but the preparing of the road for their return from the Eastern portions of the world! In the near future, our children, if not we, shall see a fulfillment of Isaiah 60 and 61. See Acts 3:19, 20.

27. The Covenant that Brings Prosperity.

Deuteronomy 29:1-13. In one great final convocation Moses rehearsed the Covenant, and endeavored to bind the people to its provisions. It becomes us all from time to time to look into the vows that we have made, reviewing them to see if we have carefully observed and kept our pledges. We need also to enlarge their scope as one new department after another is added to the experience of our souls. A review also of God's great love and care through past years should constrain us, as by the mercies of God, to present ourselves anew to him as a "living sacrifice," Rom. 12:1, 2.

Notice the double aspect of verses 12 and 13. It is not enough for us to be willing to enter into a covenant with God and to take his oath; we need that God should *establish* us unto himself that we may become his peculiar people. The established heart and character are the very special gifts of the Holy Spirit, 1 Thess. 3:13, 1 Peter 5:10.

28. The Penalty of Serving False Gods.

Deuteronomy 29:14-29. Verse 15 clearly refers to the future generations, who were included in this solemn act. The word "gall," verse 18, indicates the poisonous character of idolatry. The application of this passage to any man who falls short of the grace of God shows that the tendency to idolatry has its root in the apostasy of the heart, Heb. 12:15.

We cannot say that religion is a matter of indifference; or, if we say it, we are destined to a terrible awakening. A man may say, "I shall have peace," etc., verse 19, but there is no peace short of the peace of God, Isa. 48:22; Rom. 5:1, 2.

With respect to verse 24, the infidel Volney wrote of the present condition of Palestine: "Why is not the ancient population reproduced and perpetuated? God has doubtless pronounced a secret malediction against this land." This is one of his "secret things!" Compare verse 29 with Romans 11:33.

29. Promises to Returning Wanderers.

Deuteronomy 30:1-10. The Hebrew people have often turned to this chapter in the belief that the day must come when God will pity their forlorn condition and restore them from "the outmost parts of heaven." They do not consider that the promise was fulfilled in the return of a handful of their race under Nehemiah and Ezra.

The precious promise of verse 6, where the initial rite of Judaism is to have its spiritual fulfillment, should be compared with Isaiah 52:1. The time is coming when all Israel shall be saved from the mere external badge of their national prerogative, and shall be converted to the true faith in Christ, as their Messiah and Saviour. See Rom. 2:28, 29; Col. 2:11. Then will God rejoice over them for good. Even now, as the true Israel of God, *we* may claim this rejoicing for ourselves!

30. The Supreme Choice.

Deuteronomy 30:11-20. The immediate purpose of this passage is to encourage the people by reminding them that all things needful for a holy life are within their reach. Paul refers to it for the same purpose, Rom. 10:6.

The love and grace of God are not concealed as hidden mysteries might be. There is no need to undertake a long and dangerous journey, like that which brought the eastern Magi to the manger-bed of Bethlehem. The Word of God, which is another name for our Lord, is very nigh to us all. We have only to lift the heart to him in simple faith, and confess him as our Saviour and Lord, and we are assured of salvation from the penalty and power of sin.

Love to God and compliance with his will is the only way of life and peace. Let us choose this narrow path. The gate is strait, but the way becomes always easier. It is narrow, but pleasant.



Joshua Appointed to Succeed Moses. Deut. 31: 7, 8.

From Drawing by JULIUS SCHNORR VON CAROLSFELD. Modern German Artist.

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It is

31. The Great Lawgiver's Parting Instructions.

Deuteronomy 31:1-13. This chapter is a link between sunset and sunrise. God buries his workers, but carries on his work. None are indispensable. Moses is succeeded by Joshua; Stephen by Paul. "The grass withereth, . . . but the word of our God shall stand forever."

The old Lawgiver passes on the assurances on which he had rested. After all, men are but the figureheads of movements which are greater than themselves. God goes before; God destroys; God accompanies and delivers. Let timid souls take courage. When the Good Shepherd puts them forth he precedes them, John 10:4; the iron gates stand open at his summons, and the big stones are rolled from the door of the sepulchres, Acts 12:10; Mark 16:3. "He will not fail thee," etc., reappears in Hebrews 13:5, as the right of all believers. It is for me and thee!

32. The Charge to His Successor.

Deuteronomy 31:14-29. Moses had already announced that Joshua would succeed him; but in view of the great difficulties which confronted the new leader, it was expedient that the guiding pillar should give him the symbol and pledge of God's endorsement.

Two other sources of their allegiance were proposed. *First, a song.* National songs lay hold on memory and have a powerful effect in stirring the deepest emotions. This song, composed under the divine impulse, embodied the substance of the preceding pleadings and exhortations, and was suitable to be taught to the generations that followed. Be sure that nothing more efficiently preserves religion than noble hymns! Learn and teach them! *Secondly, the book.* See verse 24, etc. We have already heard of this. See Exod. 17:14; 24:4-7. No doubt it was to this necessity of recording the Law and chronicling the story of the Exodus that we owe the origin of the sacred books which bear the name of Moses. See John 5:46.

33. Moses' Song: The Lord's Favor Upon Israel.

Deuteronomy 31:30—32:14. The song of Moses, like the fabled song of the swan, was his last and sweetest. It is probably the noblest ode in the whole compass of the Bible, and is the source from which subsequent singers derived suggestions for their noblest outbursts. The marginal references prove how deeply it dyed the national sentiment.

It excels in the names and designations of the Almighty. He is the Rock: verses 4, 15, 18, 30, 31; Jehovah: verse 6; Father: verse 6; the Most High: verse 8; God: El, the strong, verse 15, etc. What a study are the names of God, scattered through the Bible! Each was coined to meet some need of the human soul. What the rocks of the desert are to its shifting sands God is amid the changes of this mortal existence.

This earlier part of the song is very tender. We are God's portion; the apple of his eye; as young eaglets, whom the mother-bird is carefully teaching to fly, the favored recipients of God's richest gifts, verse 13, etc.

34. Moses' Song: Israel's Response.

Deuteronomy 32:15—35. "Jeshurun" is a pet name for Israel, implying affection and endearment. The metaphor employed is derived from a pampered animal which, in consequence of rich and plentiful feeding, becomes mischievous and vicious.

Let us be warned by these denunciations against backsliding and willful sin. The greatness of our privileges will be the measure of the anguish of our doom. They who are exalted to Heaven by privilege must be cast down to Hades if they refuse and reject. The most fervent love becomes the hottest fire when it turns to jealousy. O my soul, it becomes thee to fear God as well as love him. Remember Heb. 10:26.

But what privileges await those who obey! When we abide in God, no enemy can stand against us. Five, strong in his miraculous fellowship, can chase a hundred, and a hundred, ten thousand. See Lev. 26:8; also 1

Sam. 14:1, etc. God shows "himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him." See 2 Chron. 16:9.

35. Moses Views What Others Shall Possess.

Deuteronomy 32:36-52. Sometimes God leaves us to ourselves that we may learn our weakness and sinfulness. Then, when our power is gone and we seem destined to be destroyed, we begin to repent of our idolatry and apostasy and to long after our former blessed experiences. At such times he draws graciously near to us again, to heal, to quicken and to deliver. He renders swift vengeance to the evils that have desolated us, and is merciful with a great compassion. See verse 43. In that remarkable verse, quoted in Rom. 15:10, the appeal goes forth to all the world to join with God's people in glad acknowledgment of his saving mercy.

This noble song declares for all ages the way of life and peace as contrasted with soul-death and misery. Every line of it has been fulfilled in the history of the Jews. May we not hope, also, that the time is not far distant when Jew and Gentile shall rejoice together in the bonds of common Christian fellowship? Note verses 46, 47. The love and service of God are life.

36. The Blessing of the Chosen People.

Deuteronomy 33:1-17. The glorious nature of God is the opening theme here. The reference is to the giving of the Law when, amid fire and the mediation of angels, God descended on Sinai, Psa. 18:7-9; Hab. 3:3, 4. Oh, that we, too, may sit as pupils in God's school and receive his words, verse 3.

Though *Reuben* could not excel, he was not forgotten. *Simeon* is omitted because of Numbers 25:14. *Judah* was to receive prosperity in prayer, in work and in war. Some render the benediction thus: "Bring him in safety from his wars!" But our warfare is different, Eph. 6:12.

Levi receives special blessing. Note R. V. margin:

"Thy Thummim and thy Urim are with him whom thou lovest." This is the white diamond-stone flashing with God's "Yes" or dimming with his "No," Rev. 2:17. Exod. 32:26 was never forgotten. See Matt. 25:37. But God forgets our sins, Heb. 8:12. *Benjamin's* portion may be yours. The precious things of *Joseph's* heritage pale to insignificance when contrasted with the riches of God's grace, Eph. 1:18.

37. Israel's Happy Future Promised.

Deuteronomy 33:18-29. *Zebulun* and *Issachar*, sons of *Leah*, were neighbors in Canaan, and, being on the seaboard, became wealthy by commerce. The calling of the peoples may refer to the Gentile proselytes who were influenced by these tribes, 1 Kings 5:1-6; Mark 7:26.

The blessing of the other tribes is suggested by their position in Canaan: *Gad*, the leader of the west; *Dan*, standing on the southern frontier, like a lion at bay; *Naphtali*, possessing the sea of Galilee, see R. V. margin; *Asher* on the northwest, with mountain barriers against invasion. "Iron and brass!"

Let your soul dwell in the timeless, changeless, tireless God. There is none like him. He will ride through heaven to help you, will thrust out the enemies that resist your progress, will be your fountain and dew, your corn and wine, and will place beneath you arms as tender as they are loving. However low you fall, they will always be underneath. As your day, so your strength!

38. The Great Leader's Exodus.

Deuteronomy 34:1-12. What inimitable beauty in this closing scene! The majestic withdrawal of the illustrious Lawgiver in view of the assembled nation! The panorama that greeted his undimmed gaze! The Lord's showing of it to him! The kiss, according to the ancient tradition, in which his spirit passed rapturously to its reward! The burial of his body with proper honor, Jude 9! Well might the people weep!

There is dispensational truth here also. Moses represented God's Law, which never shows signs of age; but it cannot lead the soul into the rest of God, nor give victory over our spiritual foes. For the world and each soul Moses must give place to Joshua,—that is, *Jesus*.

Be ours that face to face fellowship, that doing of his will, those divine credentials of the mighty hand, of deeds wrought in God! Psa. 90:16, 17.

REVIEW QUESTIONS ON DEUTERONOMY

OUTLINE.

- (a) What was Moses' purpose in reviewing Israel's history?
- (b) Why did he repeat the Ten Commandments and other laws?
- (c) Why did he make this new generation renew the Covenant their fathers had made?
- (d) Describe the final events in Moses' career.

INTRODUCTION.

- (e) What does the title *Deuteronomy* mean?
- (f) What may the book be said to contain?

SECTIONS 1-38. CHAPTERS 1-34.

(Each question applies to the paragraph of corresponding number in the Comments.)

1. What may be gained by reviewing God's dealings with his people?
2. What made Kadesh-barnea a momentous and memorable place?
3. Why was Israel not to fight with the inhabitants of Seir or Moab?
4. How was Sihon punished* for refusing passage through his land?
5. How did the land east of Jordan come into the possession of Israel?
6. When Moses was not permitted to lead his people across the Jordan, what did he seek to do?
7. In what sense is Jehovah "a jealous God?"
8. What had Jehovah done to impress upon Israel that he was the only true God?
9. Why was it necessary to repeat the Decalogue?
10. Why did the people feel the need of a mediator with God?
11. What were the Israelites to write upon their hearts as well as upon their doors?

12. How were they to be kept from mixing with other nations?
13. How were they to dispossess their enemies?
14. What would happen to them if they forgot God?
15. Of what failure on their part did Moses remind them?
16. Where and how had Moses intervened to save them from destruction?
17. What did the Lord require of them—and still requires of us?
18. What was promised concerning the land which Israel was about to enter?
19. What were they offered if the Commandments were kept?
20. How were they to avoid being led into idolatry?
21. What promise of a prophet to come was made to Israel?
22. What lesson was annually taught by the offering of first-fruits?
23. Where and how was the Law to be plainly written in the new land?
24. What were some of the blessings which were promised to the obedient?
25. What would be some of the terrible consequences of disobedience?
26. How were these penalties for disobedience later realized?
27. What had Jehovah done for his people which called for their loyalty in return?
28. What would be the certain result if they served false gods?
29. What is promised to those who return from wandering?
30. What great choice did Moses put before the people?
31. How did Moses now prepare for his own departure?
32. What parting charge did he give to Joshua? and to the Levites?
33. What does Moses' song declare about God's goodness to Israel?
34. What does it declare about Israel's perverseness?
35. How did Moses see the land he was not permitted to enter?
36. What special blessings were promised to the tribes descended from Joseph?
37. What was the eternal God to be to all his people?
38. How did the great Lawgiver's career fittingly close?

VI
THE BOOK OF JOSHUA

OUTLINE OF JOSHUA

POSSESSING THE PROMISED LAND

- I. ENTRANCE TO CANAAN1—5.
 1. *God's Charge to Joshua; Spies Sent to Jericho*1, 2.
 2. *The Jordan Crossed; Memorial Stones; Circumcision and the Passover*....3—5.
- II. THE CONQUEST OF CANAAN6—12.
 1. *The Fall of Jericho*6.
 2. *Achan and Ai*7—8:29.
 3. *Confirmation of the Covenant at Ebal and Gerizim*8:30—9:27.
 4. *The Southern and Northern Campaigns*10, 11.
 5. *Summary of the Conquest*.....12.
- III. THE DISTRIBUTION AND PARTITION OF CANAAN13—21.
 1. *The Borders of the Tribes Beyond the Jordan*13.
 2. *The Land Allotted to the Other Tribes*14—19.
 3. *The Cities of Refuge*20.
 4. *Cities for the Levites*21.
- IV. SETTLEMENT AND ESTABLISHMENT22—24.
 1. *The Two and a Half Tribes' Return Beyond Jordan; the Altar of Witness*22.
 2. *Joshua's Farewell Address*23—24:15.
 3. *The Covenant Renewed at Shechem; Joshua's Death*24:16—33.

THE BOOK OF JOSHUA

Though there are evident traces of the hand of an editing scribe, probably Ezra, there are many indications that the substance of this book was written while the events were still recent. There is therefore no good reason for doubting that the book in its original form was written by Joshua, as Jewish tradition alleges.

This book is to the Old Testament what the Acts of the Apostles is to the New. The name "Joshua" is equivalent to Jesus, and means "he shall save," Heb. 4:8. The Jericho of the early Church was Jerusalem, which they compassed through ten days of prayer as Israel compassed Jericho in seven days of marching. At Pentecost the walls of prejudice fell flat. Ananias and Sapphira were the Achan of the first days. The victories of the Church at Samaria, Antioch and elsewhere recall the conquests of Joshua. And the failure of the Church to go forward to the conquest of the nations finds a bitter parallel in the story of Israel's apathy toward driving out the Canaanites.

THE BOOK OF JOSHUA

1. The New Leader's Commission.

Joshua 1:1-9. Joshua was a prince of the tribe of Ephraim, and was born in Egypt. After the Exodus he became captain of the host, Exod. 17:9. With Caleb he brought back a good report of the land of Canaan, Num. 14:7. Having been found faithful in the smaller sphere, he was promoted to the wider one. As we have seen, one of Moses' closing acts was to give him a charge. He represents the Lord Jesus, in his risen glory, as the Captain and Leader of the Church.

The land of Canaan was Israel's by deed of gift; but Israel had to go up to possess it. Similarly God's grace is ours, but we must claim it by putting the foot of our faith on God's promises. Though Hittites,—our old evil habits,—revolt, if we meet them in the power of the Holy Spirit, they must yield. God is with us. Verse 5 is the perquisite of all believers. See Heb. 13:5, 6. But note that the weapon of successful conflict is God's Word. It is our sword, Eph. 6:17. See also Jer. 15:16.

2. Provisioned and United for Conquest.

Joshua 1:10-18. It was enough that God had spoken and promised. Nothing more was necessary. Joshua took immediate steps, dictated by sanctified common-sense, to prepare the people for the great step in advance to which God was calling them. We are not to throw away prudent foresight when we go forth on God's errands. Faith does not supersede precaution and preparation, where these are possible; although she does not rely on them, but on the living God.

When Joshua addressed the two tribes and a half, there was no faltering in his tone. He was absolutely certain that God would fulfill his promise, verse 15. This

inspired the people with similar courage. It was very helpful to have the reassurance of those who were least likely to be enthusiastic, since the campaign must sever them from their families. God often speaks to us through the lips of others. Can we utter verse 16 to our Lord?

3. A Heathen Woman's Act of Faith.

Joshua 2:1-14. "To view the land" was a hazardous undertaking. The physiognomy of the Hebrews would certainly betray them, and it did. The sacred writer does not commend Rahab's mode of life nor her lies. Her morality was faulty enough, but beneath it, slowly smouldering, was a spark of pure love and faith, and this would consume the rubbish and burn clear, Heb. 11:31.

The stalks of flax were probably laid out on the roof to dry. She believed, on the ground of the wonders wrought in Egypt, that Jehovah was the true God, and that his word was sure. Her faith proved itself in her works,—in her efforts to save others, and in the confidence with which she rested behind her scarlet cord. That she was sneered at and persecuted is quite likely, but she persisted and became an ancestress of Christ, Matt. 1:5. How faith greatens the soul! James 2:25.

4. The Escape and Report of the Spies.

Joshua 2:15-24. Rahab's trust in the promise of the spies, and in the efficacy of the scarlet line around her window is a striking type of the faith that relies on the promise of God, that those who are united with Christ shall be saved in this world and the next. Her faith was not the result of impulse, but of a considerate review of the story of the Exodus. Would you have faith, soak your soul in the fact and teachings of Christ.

Note the strict conditions exacted by the spies as to the extent of their responsibility. Amid the general destruction, only those sheltered in the precincts of Rahab's house would escape. To be outside, though related to

her, would not avail. So the great salvation of Jesus is available only to those who are found "in him," having upon them the divine righteousness, Phil. 3:9.

5. The Jordan Safely Crossed.

Joshua 3:1-17. For three days the host faced that swollen river. It was enough to appal them, except that, like Abraham, they dared to behold it in the light of the divine promise. Every method was adopted to impress on them that the river was cleft by and for the Ark. The distance between the people and the advancing priests was purposely widened that there might be no doubt about the miracle. Whenever we step out on the unknown path, the Ark of the Covenant, which symbolizes Christ, precedes, Isa. 52:12.

The waters far up the stream were arrested and formed themselves into a vast lake. The bed of the river became dry for miles. The priests stood still till all Israel was safely over. Not only the leaders and priests, but the rank and file. Each of the blood-bought is dear to God. They shall not come into judgment, John 5:24.

6. The Memorial Stones.

Joshua 4:1-24. Twelve stones were brought up from the Jordan and erected in Gilgal. They gave fathers the opportunity of telling their children of the miraculous passage of the river. We, too, through our Lord, have passed through the waters of death on to resurrection-ground. Let the great deliverances of God wrought for our fatherland, as well as those wrought for us personally in Christ, be more frequent subjects of family-talk.

Twelve other stones were placed in the river-bed and would be visible when the waters were low. There was an ocular demonstration, therefore, that Israel was really once in these depths. We must not forget the Rock out of which we were hewn, Isa. 51:1; 1 Cor. 6:11. Let us never cease to magnify God's grace, Psal. 40:2.

The presence of the Ark alone restrained the piled-up waters. Thus Jesus stands between us and whatever

would overwhelm us, especially sin and death, Heb. 2:14. Do not, in rejecting him, reject your only screen.

7. Renewing the Covenant with God.

Joshua 5:1-12. Evidently the people of Canaan realized that they were entering into conflict with God Almighty. This made their bitter resistance less excusable. But before Israel could go forward into the campaign, they must undergo that initial rite which from the days of Abraham had separated them unto God, Gen. 17. The outbreak at Kadesh had practically annulled that relationship, which now must be renewed, Num. 14.

Before we can serve God's high purposes in the world, we must be separated from sin. The old nature must be denied and put away, and the new nature, which is holy, harmless and separate from sin, must become ours. Nothing but death can meet the case, Col. 2:11; 2 Cor. 7:1.

The circumcised soul alone may eat of the Passover, which is Christ. We need to feed on him, keeping the daily feast with joy, 1 Cor. 5:7, 8; John 6:51, 54.

8. The Commander and His Plan of Campaign.

Joshua 5:13-6:11. When the heart is perfect with God we may count on his presence and help. It is to the separated and obedient servant that the vision of Christ, as Ally and Captain, is given. Here were three hosts marshaled by Jericho,—of the Canaanites, of Israel, and of the heavenly armies, waiting to war against the evil spirits which ruled the darkness of the land, Eph. 6:12.

The answer to Joshua's question depended on whether Israel was prepared to accept God's plan of campaign, which was very humbling to the flesh. "The Lord is with us, if we are with him," 7:11, 12; 2 Chron. 15:2. As Jericho was the key to Canaan, and its fall was to be the earnest of complete victory, the program was carefully planned to give God his rightful position. From first to last its capture was the result of the interposition of him who dwelt in the bush. Therefore, the Ark was

borne around the city, as the symbol of his presence, Num. 10:35.

9. Jericho Taken and "Devoted."

Joshua 6:12-21. "By faith the walls of Jericho fell down," Heb. 11:30. Whose faith? To some extent it was the faith of the people, who marched round them day by day in full assurance that God would not fail. But Joshua and Caleb pre-eminently were deeply concerned in the wonderful result. See Mark 11:23, 24.

To the citizens the action of the Israelite invaders must have appeared incomprehensible and even ludicrous. What do these feeble folk? But God's people were being daily trained in patience, obedience and humility. Let God perform all things for you! Many strongholds of the enemy which now remain obstinate would fall if only all the Church would encompass them in faith, 2 Cor. 10:4.

The utter destruction of the city and its people was in keeping with the usage of that age. Without doubt the city might have been a prolific source of infection. Still, its fate was terrible. We learn that God can lift human ideals by very slow, protracted processes.

10. Spared When Others Perished.

Joshua 6:22-27. It is not the amount of truth that we know which saves us, but the grasp with which we hold it. All that Rahab knew was very slight and partial, but she held to it with all the tenacity of her soul, and it was accounted to her for righteousness, Rom. 4:15. Also her works approved her faith. She identified herself with Israel by the scarlet thread, gathered her kinsfolk under her roof, and waited in anticipation of deliverance, Jas. 2:25.

She had yet to be delivered from falsehood and lying, but that God-consciousness which is the first ray of dawn had broken upon her, and would necessarily result in perfect day. Poor outcast though she was, she became incorporated with Israel and the type of Gentile

sinner who are permitted to sit with Christ in heavenly places. See Eph. 2:17, 18.

The city was devoted to destruction, lest the microbe of corruption should, through Israel, infect the world. See 1 Kings 16:34, R. V. But remember Luke 19:1-10.

11. The First Defeat and Its Cause.

Joshua 7:1-15. Israel was taught that victory is possible only where there are exact obedience and sincere consecration. We cannot cope with our foes, unless we live in unclouded fellowship with God. See 2 Chron. 15:2. Our spiritual allies in the heavenly places cannot co-operate whilst evil is harbored. Canaan was a gift to faith, and a strong spiritual life was peremptory. The gold and silver of Jericho were consecrated to God, so that Achan committed sacrilege as well as theft.

Ai (see Gen. 12:8; 13:3) lay two miles north of Jericho, and was a comparatively small place; but without God the smallest opposition is too great for us. Joshua seemed more concerned for the disgrace brought on the divine name than for the disaster to his men. Let us always look at our failures from God's side! We must not lie too long in the dust of despair, but arise to detect and put away the hidden cause of our defeat, Hosea 5:15; 6:1, 2.

12. The Troubler Found and Removed.

Joshua 7:16-26. When God deals with sin he traces its genealogy. Twice over we have the list of Achan's ancestors, verses 1, 18. To deal with sin thoroughly we need to go back to its sources. See James 1:14, 15.

How Achan's heart must have stood still as he beheld the closer approach of detection, like the contracting walls of a chamber of horrors. One by one we pass before the eye of Omniscience, as a ship's company before the quarantine officer. We cannot hide ourselves behind parents, lineage or religious ancestors. Each must give an account of himself, 2 Cor. 5:10.

Achan's family had been privy to his crime. It could

hardly have been otherwise, since the goods were buried in the common tent. They were probably grown men and women. The notions of justice were stronger and harsher in that day than with us, who have been taught by Christ. When the evil is put away, the door of hope stands wide, Hosea 2:15.

13. Ai Again Attacked.

Joshua 8:1-17. Now that the evil was put away, the people were assured of victory. "I *have* given," etc. But the assurance of faith is not inconsistent with the call for action: "Arise, go up." Though he was thus secure of victory, Joshua adopted such measures as his soldier-training suggested. Notice the place which *our* preparations should occupy. Not to shut God out, but to make the pathway along which his help may travel.

The restrictions as to the spoil which had been in force and which had led to Achan's undoing were now removed. God often tests us before allowing us to enjoy. Certain injunctions or prohibitions may be given to prove us; but are removed when our lesson is learned, Deut. 8:2.

Up the long, desolate pass Israel marched. There they could see Achan's tent, and there the scenes of their recent defeat. Their hearts were chastened. In all humility and faith they marched forward, and they were not ashamed, Joel 2:26.

14. The Enemy Completely Destroyed.

Joshua 8:18-29. Joshua's preparations were skillfully made, and in that very place where Israel had been so disastrously defeated they scored a great victory and took large spoil, especially cattle, which they drove in triumph to the camp at Gilgal.

Taught by Christ's gentle spirit, we turn our eyes away from the doom that befell the entire population. In those days notions of God's justice were not tempered by knowledge of his mercy. But the Bible records the slow growth of even the religious leaders of the race in the true knowledge of God, Acts 26:9.

Be of good cheer, you that have been repeatedly overwhelmed by your strong enemies! Your failure arises from some hidden evil lurking in your soul! Put that away! Cast it out as a cancer! Where you were defeated you shall be more than conqueror, through the grace of Christ.

15. Recording and Reading the Law.

Joshua 8:30-35. After the fall of Ai the war was suspended for a time. The divine hand restrained the Canaanites from interfering with Israel's obedience to the Mosaic code. The whole nation was marshaled in the valley between Ebal and Gerizim, to hear the Law recited and to respond with the thunder of their "Amen," Deut. 27:15. Ebal was for the curse. It was appropriate that the altar should be there, Gal. 3:13.

Remember that even when we enter the land of rest, through faith in Jesus, we cannot get away from God's holy Law; nay, it is even more perfectly fulfilled as we walk after the Spirit, Rom. 8:1-4. Let us go further and ask that, as the Law was written on those mighty stones, so it may be engraven on the tablets of our hearts, Heb. 8:10.

In the hour of completest triumph we need to stand before the Lord! It was in this spot that the incident of John 4 took place. Jesus transformed it into a valley of blessing!

16. Deceived by the Gibeonites.

Joshua 9:1-15. The presence of common peril forced the nations of Canaan to combine for self-preservation. Would that the various sections of the visible Church might see their way to a similar policy in view of the evil in the world!

Gibeon lay five miles north of Jerusalem. The name means "built on a hill." The Church has suffered more from the *wiles* of the devil than from his attacks. The deceitfulness of sin is most to be dreaded. Better to meet Caiaphas than Judas, and a black devil than a white one.

How often we act without asking the counsel of God! Yet when once an oath is taken which does not absolutely conflict with morality, God holds us to it, 2 Sam. 21:1. By this impressive instance we are taught to wait on God before making our decisions, which are apt to become irrevocable, Psa. 127:2.

17. "Hewers of Wood and Drawers of Water."

Joshua 9:16-27. The faith of these people was so far rewarded that, while their deception was punished by their reduction to the most menial tasks, yet their lives were spared; and, to a certain degree, they were incorporated with Israel and associated with the service of God's house. This position made them as unlikely as possible to seduce Israel from loyalty to Jehovah.

The Gibeonites were afterward known as Nethinim,—that is, *given*. See 1 Chron. 9:2; Ezra 2:43; 8:20. If in the earlier part of your life you have made some great mistake which threatens to limit your influence for good, do not sit down in despair, but get service out of it. Let it hew your wood and draw your water!

18. "The Lord Fought for Israel."

Joshua 10:1-14. The honor of Israel was implicated in this attack on their confederates, and Joshua went to their assistance. The deception which had been practised on him did not alienate his help. Before he started he was assured of victory, but this did not make him slothful. See verse 7. But it was by *his* faith, courage and obedience that this and other victories were won. What may not one man do when God is with him! Paganini once broke all his strings but one; then, holding up his violin, he said, "One string and Paganini."

A terrific storm burst on the fugitives as they crossed the high ridge of Beth-horon and descended in full flight to the plain. We are not called upon to explain the miracle of the sun and moon. The prolongation of daylight was probably due to some cause like that which

yields the after-glow of sunset and the optical refractions seen in high latitudes.

19. Joshua's Victories Over Israël's Foes.

Joshua 10:15-27; 40-43. The cave of Makkedah was a perpetual reminder of this wonderful victory which God gave his people. The details as to the placing of the princes' feet on the necks of their foes are related with this precision to indicate the completeness of the conquest. So at the end of this age; see 1 Cor. 15: 25. We may therefore appropriate Joshua's words about the enemies of the Church and ourselves. See verse 25.

Joshua's career was one of unbroken success, because the Lord went before him, delivering kings and armies, cities and peoples, into his hands. It was a war of utter extermination; but God's justice had waited long, Gen. 15:16, and this was the only way of stamping out the infection. The lesson for us is that no quarter can be given in the inner war. *All* our thoughts must be brought into captivity, 2 Cor. 10: 5.

20. Joshua's Obedience to the Lord's Commands.

Joshua 11:1-15. The scene is removed to the waters of Merom, near the sources of the Jordan. Hazor was the capital of the region; Jabin, like Pharaoh, was an hereditary title, Judges 4: 2. All the northern nations combined. Joshua's heart might well have failed, had it not been for the divine promise on the night before the battle, verse 6.

His attack under cover of night was like the falling of a thunderbolt. The effect was immediate. The huge host dissolved. The hocking of the horses disabled them, so that Israel was not tempted to trust in chariots and horses, Deut. 17:16; Isa. 31:1. God's will was literally carried out. But what a noble record is given of this simple-minded soldier! "He left nothing undone," verse 15. It is only as we literally obey that we can count on such success as his. See 2 Tim. 4:7.

21. Much Land Yet to Be Possessed.

Joshua 11:16-23; 13:1-7. We do not know how long the war lasted. Probably about seven years, 14:10 (forty-five less thirty-eight). It was only in David's reign that the Canaanites were finally subdued. Note that Joshua took the land and then gave it to Israel. So Christ received the fullness of the Spirit and all spiritual blessings as the Trustee of those who believe; but we must claim and appropriate our heritage. So at last there will be rest, verse 23.

With 13:1 begins the second division of this book. A Domesday Book! How significant is the sentence, "Much land to be possessed." This is true of tracts of the Bible, seldom read by ordinary Christians; of regions of experience, such as those alluded to in Colossians 3:1-4; and of countries in the world which have never been trodden by the feet of the missionary!

Read also 13:13. What pathos it contains! Either they did not believe in God's assurances, or were too indolent to claim them!

22. The Man Who Wholly Followed His God.

Joshua 14:1-15. The lot was doubtless adopted to obviate cause for jealousy or charges of favoritism. It denoted God's choice, Prov. 16:33; 18:18. It could be used only with very evident reliance on him, and in our day has been superseded by the sending of the Comforter to teach us all things, John 16:13.

It was long since Caleb had cut down the bunch of grapes near the spot of his choice, but he had never forgotten it; and now God, who had read his purpose, arranged that what his heart loved best his hand should hold and keep: "Him will I bring into the land whereinto he went," Num. 14:24.

Out of entire surrender to God springs a faith that dares to claim the realization of an olden promise, verse 12. The fact that the Anakim held Hebron did not stagger the old veteran. It was enough that God had promised! How strong and vigorous, even to hoar hairs, are those who walk with God, Isa. 40:31!

23. Rewards of Courage.

Joshua 15:13-19, 63. Arba was the greatest among the Anakim or giants, 14:15. His three sons were equally formidable, 15:14. But Caleb subdued them through an omnipotent faith, 1 John 5:4, 5. Jesus can give us victory over the Anakim of our hearts; the only condition is faith.

Twice in Scripture we are told this story of Achsah. See Judges 1:13, etc. With fatherly generosity Caleb gave her the upper and the nether springs. When men are right with God they can distribute living water to others. Let us never rest content with the lower, but aspire to the highest, John 3:12, remembering that it is our Father's good pleasure to give.

Alas for the record of verse 63! Centuries passed till David came and subdued the city, 2 Sam. 5:6. But there would have been no waiting had Judah gone up in the power of God. See Psa. 60:5, etc.

24. An Enlarged Inheritance.

Joshua 17:14-18. The greatness of the children of Joseph did not arise from their numbers; for, according to Numbers 26, the two tribes, united, did not much exceed the tribe of Judah. Also one-half of Manasseh was already settled on the other side of Jordan. But they based their claims on the special promises made decades before to Joseph, Deut. 33:13.

Very rightly Joshua bade them prove their greatness by their deeds. It is a vast misfortune when children live in the achievements of their parents, instead of standing on their own feet. Besides, they had land enough, if only they would drive out the Canaanites and cut down the shaggy forests that encumbered the soil. All around us are uncleared forests! What a precious promise for us all in verse 18! Let us cut down the wood!

25. Dividing the Remaining Territory.

Joshua 18:1-10; 19:49-51. The Tabernacle had remained in Gilgal. It must now be removed to Shiloh. a

site selected by God himself, Deut. 12:11; Psa. 78:60. Shiloh means *rest*, and it commemorated the ending of the war. The honor of having God's dwelling-place within its border was probably given to Ephraim as the tribe to which Joshua belonged.

As an inducement to occupy the land, this further commission was sent forth. How many of us are equally slack to appropriate the blessings stored up in the Saviour! Well is it that God, through the ages, has sent pioneers to tell us what we are missing and to stimulate our zeal.

The veteran leader had earned a good reward. His portion was called "the portion of the sun," probably because of its aspect. Let us live and walk in the light.

26. Cities of Refuge.

Joshua 20:1-9. These arrangements carried out Numbers 35:9-34. Remember the distinction between deliberate murder and unintentional homicide. Only those who had committed the latter were eligible for refuge.

The fugitive told his story at the gate and was admitted provisionally, verse 4. His case was afterward investigated by the citizens or their delegates; and if his story were found correct, he might stay till the death of the high priest. This functionary was a type of our Lord; and thus the death of each high priest pre-signified that death by which captive souls are freed and the remembrance of sin made to cease.

The cities were placed so as to be within easy access from all parts of the country. See Prov. 18:10; Heb. 6:18. It is an urgent question for us all, Are we within the city, the walls and bulwarks of which are salvation?

27. The Lord's Promises Fulfilled.

Joshua 21:1-3, 40-45. After the cities of refuge had been provided, those to be set apart for priests and Levites were next allotted, Num. 35:1-8. Forty-two cities were set apart in addition to the six cities of refuge. The priests and the Levites were not the sole possessors

of those towns, but dwelt in them, receiving freely their dwellings and pasture-lands. The closing verses represent the position of affairs at Joshua's death. So far as God's promises went, there had been no failure. The chronicler repeatedly affirms that. It is right to distinguish, says Calvin, between the clear, certain and unwavering fidelity of God, and the weakness and the indolence of his people, which cause God's gifts to slip from their hands.

At the end of life, when we review it from our last halting-place, we shall accept as absolutely true the conclusion of verse 45, and much more; but alas, for our failures to use his gifts to the full!

28. Averting War Between Brethren.

Joshua 22:1-20. There was generous appreciation of services rendered as Joshua dismissed the warriors. Something like "Well-done, good and faithful servant," rings through his words. But he takes care to remind them that the tenure of their lands depends wholly on their obedience. This will explain the brief and transient existence of the trans-Jordanic tribes.

The altar was probably erected on the east of the Jordan. It was "over against" the land of Canaan, and was perhaps a fac-simile of that at Shiloh. The prompting motive was to cement the union between themselves and the other tribes. But that end would have been better served had they obeyed the divine command in assembling annually with them. You can secure unity, not by external symbols, but by spiritual affinity and fellowship.

29. The Altar of Witness.

Joshua 22:21-34. Phinehas and the ten princes did their work well. It was politic as well as true to remind the departing warriors that they could not rebel against God without involving the whole nation. So deeply did the spirit of love work in their hearts that Phinehas and his men even proposed to share the land of western Canaan with them, rather than that they should drift

away from the Law of God. There was a gentleness, a desire to conciliate, a yearning over their brethren, which were quite after the mind of Christ, and which had the desired effect in a frank disavowal of any of those unworthy motives that their brethren had imputed.

So is it always. Let us lay aside the sword for the olive-branch. Before proceeding to severer measures, whether as individuals or as nations, let us ever try to restore our brethren "in the spirit of meekness." Let us count it a greater gain to *win* a brother than to conquer him. As we grow older, may we become more mellow! Matt. 18:15; Gal. 6:1-5.

30. Joshua's Farewell Address.

Joshua 23:1-16. Joshua's anxiety for the welfare of his people after his death has New Testament parallels. See Acts 20:29; 2 Peter 1:13-15; and especially John 13-15. As always, he lays stress on what the Lord had done, verses 3, 5, 9. Not one ray of glory is stolen for himself.

He argues for their steadfastness on three grounds: There are the promises of verse 5; the threatenings of verses 11-13; the exhortations of verses 14-16. Our failure to drive out the foes of our heart is due to our failure to follow the Lord. A lack of whole-hearted surrender lies at the root of all failure. Cleaving to the Lord is the Old Testament way of saying "abide in Christ," John 15.

In contrast to man's inconstancy and infidelity, notice the sublime testimony to God's faithfulness. "Not one thing hath failed," verse 14. When at last we review our life, we, too, shall be able to say as much, if only by his grace we are kept faithful and obedient. We cannot keep the old Covenant, but the new stands forever, Jer. 31:31.

31. The Lesson of Israel's History.

Joshua 24:1-15. The previous chapter contains Joshua's own last words of warning to Israel; here he is God's mouthpiece: "Thus saith the Lord God of Israel."

There is, first, the recapitulation of past mercy. From time to time we should definitely recall, for our children's sake, the divine interpositions in our national and domestic life.

It is interesting in the opening words to learn that Abraham was called out of an idolatrous family. This was the pit whence he had been digged, Isa. 51:1. He was a Gentile before he became a Jew; and was familiar with all the seductions of a lower religious type before he definitely stood for the only true God. It took long to eradicate this evil strain from Israel. During their sojourn in Egypt they had yielded to the fascinations of idolatry, verse 14. Joshua at least had made his choice! What a blessed thing for a family, when the parents make the avowal of verse 15. Why not from henceforth?

32. Joshua's Last Service to His People.

Joshua 24:16-33. Joshua did well to discourage their proud vauntings, and to show that the people could not in their own might realize God's ideal, Psal. 105:4. The book of Judges is a bitter commentary on these lofty words.

What the stone of witness was to Israel, the ordinances of the Lord's Supper and Baptism are to the Church and to the world. The walls of our private chambers have listened to our prayers and tears. God help us to be true to them!

Joshua and the elders, while they lived, were a steady influence to Israel. Such was the influence of the Apostles on the early Church. Let us learn the value of character. Compare verse 32 with Gen. 50:25 and Exod. 13:19. Take heart! The fulfillment of God's promise may tarry, but his word is sure as the morning light, Hosea 6:1-4.

REVIEW QUESTIONS ON JOSHUA

OUTLINE.

- (a) How does this book naturally divide into four parts?
- (b) What were the principal events connected with the entrance into Canaan?
- (c) What victories and what defeat marked the conquest of the land?
- (d) Which tribes were located east of the Jordan and which in the Promised Land itself?

INTRODUCTION.

- (e) What New Testament book resembles JOSHUA and how?

SECTIONS 1-32. CHAPTERS 1-24.

(Each question applies to the paragraph of corresponding number in the Comments.)

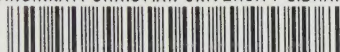
- 1. How was Joshua encouraged and counseled in preparation for his great task?
- 2. What steps did he take to unite all the tribes for the campaign before them?
- 3. How did the two spies find an ally in the enemy's city?
- 4. How did Rahab show her trust in the true God?
- 5. How did God make a path for his people into the land he had promised them?
- 6. What provision was made for preserving a memorial of the crossing of the Jordan?
- 7. What was the purpose of the renewed observance of circumcision and the Passover?
- 8. From whom and how did Joshua receive instructions for his first attack?
- 9. How was Jericho captured and why was it destroyed?
- 10. How was Rahab's faith rewarded?
- 11. How did greed check the onward march?
- 12. How was the sin brought to light and dealt with?
- 13. How was Ai attacked a second time?

14. How was defeat now turned into victory?
15. How were the conquerors now reminded that they themselves must obey God's laws?
16. How was Joshua deceived by the Gibeonites?
17. What place did they henceforth fill in Israel?
18. How was Joshua aided in conquering the kings of the South?
19. Why were all these Canaanites destroyed?
20. How did Joshua carry out Jehovah's sentence against the kings of the North?
21. What yet remained undone when Joshua had become old?
22. What courageous request did Caleb make?
23. Who won Caleb's daughter and what wedding-gifts did her father give with her?
24. How did the descendants of Joseph get sufficient land?
25. How was the remaining territory distributed?
26. What was the purpose of the Cities of Refuge?
27. How were the Levites provided with homes?
28. What cause of misunderstanding arose between the tribes east of the Jordan and the other tribes?
29. How did the altar become a witness to the fact that all the tribes served Jehovah, the one true God?
30. What was Joshua's great desire, as expressed in his farewell address?
31. What great lesson did he draw from Israel's national history?
32. How did he bind them to loyalty to their God?



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